

AN *Invitation*  
A P O L O G Y  
FOR THE  
MINISTERS

Who Subscribed *only* unto the Stating of

The Truths and Errours

I N

Mr. *WILLIAM*s Book.

S H E W I N G,

That the Gospel which they Preach, is the Old  
Everlasting Gospel of Christ.

A N D,

Vindicating them from the Calumnies, wherewith they (espe-  
cially the younger sort of them) have been unjustly asper-  
sed by the Letter from a Minister in the City, to a Mi-  
nister in the Countrey.

*By M<sup>r</sup>. Lorimer.*

*Nos quidem neque expavescimus, neque pertimescimus ea quæ ab ignorantibus patimur, cum  
ad hanc Sæclam utique Susceptæ conditione ejus patti venerimus, ut etiam animas no-  
stras amittamur in hoc pugna accedamus, ea quæ Deus repromittit consequi optantes, &  
ea quæ Diversa vitæ comminatur, pati timentes. Tertullianus ad Scapulam in ipso li-  
bri principio.*

L O N D O N,

Printed for John Lawrence, at the Angel in the Poultry, MDCXCIV.



# AN APOLOGY FOR THE MINISTERS

Of the Church of England

The Church of England

McWILLIAMS Book

That the Gospel which they preach is the  
 Evangelical Gospel of Christ.

And  
 vindicating them from the Charge, whosoever they (elpe)  
 only the younger of them, have been unjustly asser-  
 ted by the learned a Minister in the City, to a dis-  
 mission in the Country.

Printed by J. W. Smith, at the Sign of the Cross, in the Strand, London.

LONDON

W 202308

**I**F a *Profest Enemy, or a Common and Known Lier* had fallen  
*down upon us with his Tongue or Pen, and called us Here-*  
*ticks, Arminian, Pelagian Hereticks, Corrupters of the*  
*Old, and Preachers of a New Gospel; we should have*  
*held our peace, and in silence despised his Lies and Revilings. But*  
*since a Brother who professeth seriousness in Religion, and hath*  
*some credit amongst good People that fear God, and love the Truth*  
*and Purity of Christ's Gospel, has publickly in Print proclaimed us*  
*to be Hereticks, and Preachers of a New Gospel; our Conscien-*  
*ces would not suffer us any longer to keep silence: Because it might*  
*have been justly interpreted to be an Argument and Evidence of*  
*our guilt, and good People might have thought that we could say*  
*nothing in our own defence; and therefore that they had good rea-*  
*son upon the uncontrolled Testimony of a serious Brother, to be-*  
*lieve that we are Hereticks indeed, Pelagian, Arminian Here-*  
*ticks, Corrupters of the Old, and Preachers of a New Gospel.*  
*Wherefore to remedy this, and to undeceive the Lords People, and*  
*maintain the Truth and Purity of his Gospel, with the credit of*

## The Preface to the Reader.

*his Ministry, we judged our selves obliged in Conscience to write and publish this Apology; wherein our design is to do wrong to no Man, no not to him who hath wronged us: But to do right unto the Truth, to clear up our own Innocency as to the things we are falsely charged with, and to let good people see that the testimony of our accuser is not true; and therefore can be no proof that we are Heretical Preachers of a New Gospel, or Corrupters of the Old.*

*If we had still kept silence and suppressed this Apology, all the World that should have heard how we were accused, might have either suspected us of Heresie, or have blamed us, (if guiltless,) for keeping silence, and suffering our Ministry to remain aspersed with such a publick charge of Heresie, unanswered: But we are sure none can have just cause to be offended with us for our now publishing it. Since if Men would suppose our case to be their own; and that a reputed serious good Man had in a printed Libel accused them of damnable Heresie, they cannot but see, That they should judge it their Duty to defend themselves, and to clear up their own innocency as to that matter. Now if Men would judge thus, if it were their own case; right reason will assure them that they should pass the like judgment in our case, upon supposition that we know our selves not to be guilty of the Crime, which we are charged with. And the supposition is most certainly true, for we know as certainly that we are not guilty of that crime, as we know any other thing in the World; we know as certainly that we do not preach a New Gospel, as we know that there is an Old Gospel in the Church or World: So then, if we are to be blamed for anything, it is for not doing this work sooner; but for that we could alledge more Reasons, than we need here to mention: It is enough to tell the World, that there being more than one concerned in this cause, it was fit that we should know one anothers mind, and proceed in it with one joint consent, which it required some time to do. Whereunto we add, That the Collecting and Transcribing so many and large Testimonies out of the Writings of Ancient and Modern Divines required yet more time; Moreover we profess our selves not to be of the number of those who make boast of their quick and hasty Births; and boldly venture to publish unto the World any thing*

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as it comes into their heads, without taking time to consider whether it be such as will endure a strict Tryal by the Rule of Truth and Righteousness. If our Author had taken more time to consider of the several particulars of his Letter of Information, before he had printed it; we are apt to think that (if he be a good Man, as we would hope he is) he would have seen cause to have altered much of it, or to have suppressed it altogether, as well for his own particular good, as for the common good of Christ's Church. But it seems, that since all the World almost is engaged in War at this day, he had an ambitious desire to be a Warriour likewise; and that desire (if he was not put on by others) would not let him be quiet, but he must sound the Trumpet, and both proclaim an Ecclesiastical War, and also himself make the first Attack. But for us, we are not of such a Spirit; so far from it, that we have a real aversion to such Ecclesiastical War, and are not easily brought to it: Indeed it is purely defensive on our side, and we were necessitated so to.

In the managing of it we have endeavoured no farther to offend the first aggressour, than was necessary to defend our selves. We are not conscious to our selves, of having given him just cause of offence, unless our refusing his errors, vindicating our selves from his Calumnies, and exposing the weakness, and sometimes the ridiculousness of his reasonings, be matter of offence to him: And if that be all, it is offence taken, not given, for which he may blame himself. For he having attacked us in such Hostile, Rude, Unbrotherly and Unchristian manner, we could not reject his Attack, so as to secure the Truth of God, the Honour of Religion, and our own good Names, without answering him, as we have done. But if it shall be made appear to us, that in any thing we have passed the limits of a just self-Defence; and have done him any real injury, (which is more than we know,) we shall be sorry for it, and willing to do him right: For we do really wish him well, and should be ready to do him any office of love and kindness that lyes in our power. But we have no moral lawful power to suffer any Brother to throw Dirt on us, the vile Dirt of Pelagian Heresie, and to hold our hands, and not endeavour to wipe it off again. Certainly Pelagianisme is one of the things in the whole World which we do most abhor. Jerome: (who was contemporary with Pelagius, writing against the Pelagians.

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*Hierom. Epist. ad Crespionem prope medium. Afferunt se per arbitrii libertatem nequam ultra necessarium habere Deum, &c. — Quid rursus te ingeris, ut nihil possum facere, nisi tu in me tua dona compleris?*

*gians saith,* That they assert, by reason of the free Will which God hath once given them, they stand no more in need of God. For, (*saith the Pelagian unto God*) Thou hast once given me free Will, that I may do what I will: Wherefore dost thou intrude thy

self again, so that I can do nothing, unless thou perfect thy gifts in me? *Which Jerome thus confutes,* [They are ignorant of what is written, 1 Cor. 4. 7. What hast thou, that thou hast not received, and if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it? And, It is not of him that willeth, nor

*Velle & currere meum est, sed ipsum meum, sine dei semper auxilio, non erit meum.*

of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth Mercy, Rom. 9. 16. It is my part to will and to run, but without the continual help of God, that very thing which is mine, will not be mine.

(*That is, it will never be done by me, but will come to nothing.*)

For the same Apostle saith, It is God who worketh in us, both to will and to do, Phil. 2. 13. God is always bestowing, always giving. That which God hath once given me, is not sufficient for me, unless he shall still continually give me. I ask that I may receive,

*Non sufficit mihi, quod semel donavit, nisi semper donaverit, &c.*

and when I have received, I ask again. I am covetous to receive the gifts of God; neither is he wanting in giving, nor am I fatiated in receiving: By how much the more I drink in the Grace of God, by so much the more do I thirst after it. *This which Jerome wrote Twelve hundred years ago against the Pelagians with his Pen, we subscribe to it with heart and hand.*

*Cœlestini de gratiâ dei Epist. cap. 9. Ita deus in corribus hominum, &c.*

*In like manner we subscribe to that of Cœlestin in his Epistle to the Gauls in behalf of Prosper and Hilary.*

God so works in the hearts of Men, and on Free Will it self, that a Holy Thought, Pious Counsel, and every good motion of the Will is from God, for it is by him, that we can do any good, without whom we can do no good. *And to the Seventh Canon of the second Council of*

Orange.



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Orange. If any shall affirm that Man by the strength of Nature, without the illumination and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, can think or choose aright any good that pertains to the happiness of Eternal Life, or that he can savingly consent to the Evangelical preaching, He is deceived by an Heretical Spirit, not understanding the voice of God, saying, in the Gospel, *John* 15. 5. Without me, ye can do nothing. And that of the Apostle, *2 Cor.* 3. 5. Not that we are sufficient of our selves to think any thing as of our selves, but our sufficiency is of God. *All this we firmly believe and heartily embrace.* And therefore whosoever saith that we are Pelagians or Semipelagians, either he knows us not, and ignorantly defames us; or if he know us and our Principles, he knowingly belyes us, which we hope our Accuser would not do. And as we our selves are not Pelagians, no nor Semipelagians, so we do not plead for any that are such; but are ready to plead for the Truth against them, as the Lord shall call us, and enable us thereunto.

As for the Brethren that are accused, a number of them hath approved our Apology; and we plead only for them who do or shall approve it. But if there should be any of the Subscribers, whom we have not consulted with, who unknown to us, are of a judgment different from us in these matters; we leave them to plead for themselves. Yet though we thus write, we doubt not, but they will all agree to the Sum and Substance of what we have said and proved in this our Apology. As (1.) That the Gospel is a new Law of Grace in the Sense we have affirmed and proved it so to be, by the Word of God, and by the Testimonies of Ancient Fathers and Modern Divines. (2.) That this Law of Grace, or Gospel-Covenant is conditional, as we have stated the conditionality of it, that is, It is conditional with respect to the subsequent Blessings and Benefits of it, such as Justification and Glorification. (3.) That Evangelical Repentance is a Condition Dispositive of the Subject (Man), necessary in order to his being justified, as we have proved by Scripture and Reason, and by many Testimonies of Ancient Fathers and Modern Divines; And that a lively effectual Faith is the Condition receptive and applicative of the Object (Christ and his Righteousness), by and for which only,  
Man,

## The Preface to the Reader.

Man is justified. Finally, That sincere Evangelical Obedience proceeding from a Principle of true Faith, is a condition necessary on Mans part, unto his obtaining possession of Eternal Salvation in Heaven; for the alone merits of Christ. (4.) That in effectual calling by the Word and Spirit of Christ, there is a real change and holy qualifications wrought in the Soul of Man, in order of Nature before he be justified and pardoned. (5.) That the Common distinction is true, as we have explained it, and Calvin and the Synod of Dort approved it, That Christ dyed for all men sufficiently; but for the Elect only, efficaciously. This is the summ of what we believe and here contend for, and we doubt not, but all the Subscribers (even those of them, whom we never saw) do and will agree to these things, which are the commonly received Doctrines of the Reformed Churches. And it is for such Persons that we make an Apology, and for no others. In pleading for these things aforesaid, we are persuaded in our own Conscience, (and we think upon good and solid grounds) that we plead for the Truth and Purity of the Gospel; the defence whereof to the Glory of God, is the principal thing that we propose to our selves in this present Apology: And next to God's Glory in the defence of his Truth, we design the Edification and Common Good of Christ's Church, and the defence of our selves only in subserviency to those higher ends. That the Father of Lights, the God of Truth and Love, and Peace, would pour out upon us all, of all persuasions, a Spirit of Light and Love, Purity and Peace, that we may all see the Truth with our minds, believe and love it with our hearts, and profess and practice it purely and peaceably in our lives, to the Glory of God in Christ, to the Honour of Religion, and to the Spiritual and Eternal good of our own and others Souls, is and through Grace shall be our fervent and frequent Prayer unto him that is able to do for us exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think; unto whom be Glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all Ages, World without end. Amen.

Ephes. 3. 20, 21.

THE

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**T**itle-Page, for *nostraas* read *nostras*. Preface, page 3, line 2, read *Rule*.  
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## Advertisement.

A Brief Review of Mr. Davis's Vindication: By Giles Firmin, one of the United Brethren: Printed by John Lawrence, at the Angel in the Poultry, 1693.

THE

## The Introduction.

**H**Oly David, the man after Gods own heart, said of old, *My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.* We would it were thus with all that pretend to any seriousness in the Profession of the Protestant Religion, at this day. But alas! where are such to be found? where are they that are affected with the fear of God, as David was, and that are duly apprehensive of the Judgments of God, which are actually upon, and seem to be yet further coming upon the Reformed Churches? Is it not visible, that all sorts of men turn to their several courses of sin, as the Horse rusheth into the battle. They run on in the ways of their own hearts, blindly and boldly without considering or fearing the issue. And who can wonder, that those who have hardened their hearts from Gods fear, should boldly venture upon sin, especially if they have got a strong, but false persuasion, that they are *The Temple of the Lord*, the true, the best, and purest Church upon Earth, most highly in favour with God, and that their sins are the spots of Gods children, which do not hurt them, and are well consistent with his highest Love and Favour. The Scriptures of truth assure us, that when once Professors of Religion have brought themselves to this, then they can securely *lean upon the Lord*, and say, *is not the Lord amongst us? none evil can come upon us.* Though at the same time, the Lord saith, that *Sion for your sakes shall be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps.* We wish it be not so with us at this day. But when we look abroad into the World, and into the present state of the Reformed Churches at home and abroad, and see, or hear, what lives Men generally lead, how they fight against God, and against one another; against God by transgressing all his holy, just, and good Laws, and by turning his Grace into Lasciviousness: And against one another, by injustice and uncharitableness, by malice and envy, by lying and slandering, &c. We cannot but fear, that God is *against us*, and will fight against us, as we are against him, and fight against him. And it greatly encreases our fear, to see that those, who pretend to greatest seriousness in Religion, have lately fallen out, and have been quarrelling together about such a practical point of Religion as that is, *Whether true Repentance is necessary before we can obtain from God the pardon of our sins, through the alone satisfaction, and Merits of Christ.* When God is loudly calling us to Repentance, for obtaining the pardon of our sins, and we should all be found in the practice of Repentance, in order to that end; we are like Madmen fallen to disputing, *Whether our Repentance be necessary*, before we are pardoned, when we are pardoned, or after we are pardoned. And there are those amongst us, who have raised a great clamour against such honest, and faithful Ministers of Christ, as dare tell, and dare not but tell the People, that they must truly repent of their sins, before they can obtain the pardon of them;



although at the same time they assure the people, from the Lord, that God, for Christs sake, will most certainly pardon them, immediately after they have repented. This is cried out against, as dangerous Doctrine, by a sort of Religious People amongst us, who will have it, that Repentance is only necessary after God hath pardoned us, but not before. And though to please these People, some Ministers have openly granted, That Repentance, and pardon of Sin, are simultaneous in time, that is, they are not one before another for any space of time, but are both together; only Repentance is first in order of Nature, by the grace thereof to dispose, and prepare us for receiving our Pardon by Faith in Christs Blood: Yet this will not give them content, but they will have their Pardon before Repentance; and the Ministers who preach, or write otherwise, shall be proclaimed to be Antichristian, Arminian, or any thing that Pellican suggests. This, we say, greatly increaseth our fears; for to us it seems evident, that the hand of God is in this matter, that is plainly, that Satan has a wicked design by this means, to keep the People from Repentance; and so from obtaining the pardon of their sins, that the desolating judgments of God may come upon the Nation, and that we may be all destroyed together. And that Satan may not be discovered, he hath artificially disguised himself, and appears on the stage, transformed into an Angel of Light, pleading for the exaltation of the glorious riches of free grace, in the justification of Sinners by the Blood of Christ, without all works of any Law whatsoever; and with great appearance of Zeal asserting, That the freeness of Gods Grace in the justification of Sinners by Faith in the Blood, Merits, and satisfaction of Christ, cannot possibly be shamed, unless it be denied, that true Repentance is antecedently necessary to our obtaining the pardon of our Sins. It seems to us, that this is Satans Plot against us, and that he hath thus disguised himself, the better to carry it on, and the more effectually to compass his design upon us: And this is the more probable; because we find, that at the beginning of the Reformation Satan plaid the same game, when he perceived, that by our first Reformers preaching up justification by Faith only, and not by Works, many People were induced to separate from the Church of Rome, and embrace the Reformation; he endeavoured to make them believe, that since Sinners are justified, and Pardoned by Faith only, and not by Works; then there was no necessity, that they should repent of their Sins, in order to their obtaining the Pardon of them: And thus he thought, that though they had got their feet loosed out of one of his snares, yet he should still keep them fast in another, and lead them Captive at his will. That this is so indeed, and no Fiction of ours, is manifest from the Testimony of Bishop Hooper, that blessed, faithful, and valiant Martyr of Christ, who, in the Reign of Queen Mary, was burnt alive, for the Protestant Religion, in a slow Fire, about the space of three quarters of an hour; and sealed the Truth of the Gospel with his blood. This Man of God, in a Book of his intitled, *A Declaration of Christ and his Office*, Printed at Zurich, in the Year 1547. Chap. VII. handling the point of justification, saith, *There is certain, and too true, Let the whole Gospel be preached unto the World, as it ought to be, Repentance and a veritable Life with Faith, as God preached the Gospel unto Adam in Paradise, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, saying, Vae Genti Peccatrici, &c. (Isa. 1. 9, &c.) John the Baptist, opening ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand: As Christ did, Repent and believe the Gospel, Mark 1. and then of an hundred that come to the Gospel, there would not come one. When they hear sole (or only) faith, and the mercy of God to justify, and relax*

they

they overcome all men; at all times, with thanksgiving, they embrace this Gospel with all joy, and willing heart. And what is he that would not receive this Gospel? The flesh is self, were there no iniquity at all in it, would receive this Gospel, because it promises aid, help, and consolation, without Works. But now speak of the other part of the Gospel, as Paul teacheth, Rom. 8. 13. If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; And as he prescribeth the life of a justified man, in the same Epistle, Chap. 12. 13, 14, 15, 16. And Christ, Mat. 10. And Peter in the 2 Epistle and 1 Chap. This part of the Gospel is not so pleasant; therefore Men take the first liberty, &c. Thus that blessed Saint, who feared neither Man nor Devil, but in the true faith, and fear of God, set himself with a Divine courage and holy boldness, to oppose the Devil and all his Instruments, to destroy his Kingdom in the World; and on the contrary, to exalt the Name, and Glory of God, and to set up Christs Spiritual Kingdom in the hearts and lives of Men. Would to God that we had many Hoopers amongst us at this day; who saith again, in the same Chapter, not far from the beginning, Nothing maketh the cause wherefore this mercy (to wit of Justification) should be given, saving, only the death of Christ, which is the true atonement, the only sufficient Price, and Gage for sin. And although it be necessary, and requisite, that in the Justification of a Sinner, contrition be present, and that necessarily charity, and virtuous life, must follow; yet doth the Scripture attribute only remission of sin unto the mercy of God, which is given only for the Merits of Christ, and received solely by Faith. Paul doth not exclude those virtues to be present, but he excludeth the merits of those virtues, and doth ascribe the cause of our acceptation unto the grace of God only for Christ. If we could all be so wise and humble, as to learn of that holy Man, and to follow him, as he learned of, and followed Christ and his Apostles; we might yet defeat Satan, as to the foresaid Plot that he is carrying on to ruin us. But alas! it grieves us to the heart, that some Ministers, by not watching against that most subtle malicious enemy of God and Man, have suffered themselves to be imposed upon so far as to turn (*υπερβολος αναντα*) Accusers of the Brethren; who stand up for God and Man, in opposition to Satan, and faithfully tell the People, that they must, through Grace, truly repent of their sins, in order to obtain the pardon of them.

And particularly, we are truly sorry, that the Author of the Letter from a Minister in the City, &c. should have meddled in this matter, and that he should become Accuser of the Brethren, especially of those pious Young Men, who gave themselves up to the work of the Ministry in difficult and dangerous times, without any visible encouragement thereunto from any thing in this World; and also against great visible discouragements, both from the World, and the Devil. What have those Younger Brethren done to provoke this Brother (who is himself also one of the younger sort) to become their Accuser? Some of us, who are Older than they, have known several of them these many years; and yet never knew any evil by them, nor heard any evil of them. Since we first knew them, it hath to us looked like a Token for good to his People in this Nation, that the Lord hath raised up so many young men, and hath spirited, and to such a degree gifted them for the Ministry under such discouraging circumstances. But now after all that God hath done for, and by those Brethren, notwithstanding the presence of God with them, and the blessing of God upon their Labours; up starts one, who calls himself a Minister in the City, and accuses them of being Corrupters of the pure Gospel of Christ, of new ramping an Arminian Gospel, and obtruding it on the People, to the certain

Let. pag. 10.

*and of their Souls that believe it.* Yea, he raiseth the Charge higher in *pag. 13* and saith, That *Judicious Observers cannot but already perceive a coincidence between their cause, and that of these two Pests of the Church, Pelagius and Arminius; and do fear more, when, &c.* Here is an high Charge indeed; but where is there any evidence for all this? One would think, that no Man; who pretends such relation unto Christ, and such seriousness in Christian Religion, as this Man doth, should dare thus to accuse his Brethren, and fellow-Ministers, of such horrid Crimes, without clear, and certain evidence; whereby he can prove them guilty. For if Men be suffered to accuse one another of atrocious Crimes, without being obliged to prove their accusation, no Man will be able to preserve his Good Name, nor will it be possible for Men to live peaceably together in any Society, Civil or Religious. This Brother therefore ought to have been made to prove his accusation, that the Churches might have been delivered from those young Hereticks, if he had proved them to be such: Or, if he had failed in his proof, that the Churches might know what spirit he is of, who hath kindled a Fire in the Church, by traducing the Ministers of Christ, and falsely accusing them of Heresie.

But some may possibly say, Hath he not by his printed Letter proved them guilty of *Arminian* and *Pelagian* Heresie? To which we answer, that no Man of Judgment, who reads it, can see any such proof in it; nor indeed see just cause to harbour any such Thought of them, if he but know the Men accused, have heard their Doctrine, and seen their manner of life; and if wihal he understand what Pelagianism and Arminianism are. It is true, he boldly accuses them of Arminianism and Pelagianism, and of preaching a new Gospel; and to make the simple People believe that his accusation is well grounded, he saies, that *Judicious Observers perceive their cause to be coincident with that of Pelagius, &c.* That they are relieved, and do not yet speak out upon such and such points, and that they hold such things, as are utterly inconsistent with the Freeness of Gods Grace in Justifying Sinners, by the Satisfaction, and Merits of Christs Blood. These things are often affirmed, or insinuated, throughout the Letter; but none of them proved. A Monster, or a Man of Straw, of his own making, is set up to represent the Brethren; and then he calls upon the People to come, and see with what a Spirit of Zeal he hews it all into pieces. This is a way of writing, that is taking with weak Let. p. 14, 15. well-meaning People; and his holding Repentance not to be necessary in order to the obtaining pardon of sin, may be pleasing to Satan; and very taking with Hypocrites; but no body of Judgment, and Understanding, can ever think, that this is the way to prove the fore-said Accusation in matter of fact. For our parts we have diligently considered every Paragraph of his Letter, and in it all, cannot find one proof of the said Accusation: And after all, we believe in our consciences, that the Brethren accused are innocent of the Crime, he lays to their charge. Indeed, we know assuredly, that several of them are innocent thereof; and till the contrary be proved, and appear, we must think so of them all. We would have all Men to do so by us, in case we were falsely accused, and in is but just and reasonable, that we do as we would be done by. If we should happen to be mistaken, as to any of the Brethren, whose cause we plead, we err on the safer side; for charity thinketh no evil. True Love will not suffer a Christian heart to entertain a deliberate Thought of his Brother,

Brother, that he is an ill Man, or an Heretic, *without* further proof he is so.

We have met with no such evidence, either in the aforesaid Letter, or any where else; and therefore we must still think, that the accused Brethren are innocent of the Crime they are charged with: and that the Accuser of them (if he be a good man yet) hath done a very ill thing in *scandalizing* the Gods Ministers; and we heartily pray God to give him repentance, and forgiveness for his fault.

And that the World may see, and that this Brother himself may feel, how rash, and unchristian a thing, he hath done, in accusing the Brethren, as aforesaid.

1. We declare in general (before we come to examine the several particulars in his Letter, which relate to this matter) That we never were, and that we now are not, and that (we trust in God) we never shall be Arminians or Pelagians: This we freely, and unfeignedly declare, as in the presence of the Lord, to whom we must give an account of all our Actions.

2. And yet further, to remove all ground of suspicion (if it be possible) of our corrupting the Gospel in the point of Justification, we accept of the Test, proposed to us by the Author of the Letter, *Page 29* and declare, That we will subscribe, all those Articles of the *new* Confession of Faith, which he hath there transcribed; together with the Passage out of the larger Catechism: We say, We will subscribe

them in the Assembly *own sense*. We add this limitation, because the *Question* cause the Author of the Letter hath not taken into his Test. How is the grace that part of the larger Catechism, \* which declares, that God of God manifested in the second Covenant, requires Faith as the condition, to be interested in the *second* condition or qualification, and will have it to be only the Instrument of Justification. But by Comparing the confession of Faith with the Catechism, we find, that the Assembly held Faith to be both an Instrument and a Condition. And therefore every honest Man that will subscribe in the Assembly *own sense*, must so hold Faith to be an Instrument, as to be a Condition also. Now the Question is, How Faith can be both an Instrument, and a Condition? To which we answer; That in our Judgement it is thus. Distinguish between a *meer* Physical Instrument, and a *moral federal* Instrument. Faith is not a *meer* physical Instrument; but it is a *moral federal* Instrument. Now a *moral federal* Instrument is the same thing with a *federal* Condition. Instrument and Condition, in this sense, are but two words to signify the same thing.

If this do not satisfy our Brother, but he will still say, That the notion of an Instrument, and the notion of a Condition, are two distinct notions, and cannot both agree to the same thing, to the same faith. We answer;

1. If he will say so, we desire the World to take notice, that it is he himself, who opposes the Assembly, and not we.

2. In behalf of the Assembly, we answer, That the notion of a *moral federal* Instrument, and the notion of a *federal* Condition, are not two distinct, but one and the same notion.

3. Suppose they were two distinct notions, yet the same thing; the same faith,

in different respects, is capable of two distinct notions: But so it is, that Faith may be considered under two different respects.

(1.) Faith is considered with respect to Christ himself, and his Righteousness; and so it hath the notion of an *Instrument*; whereby we receive Him, and His Righteousness; and apply them to our own Souls.

(2.) Faith is considered with respect to Justification it self, or the Act whereby God Justifies us for the sake of Christ, and his Righteousness; and so it hath the notion of a *Condition*, upon which God Justifies us, for the sake of Christ, and his Righteousness.

In this respect, Faith cannot have the notion of a *Physical Instrument*; for a *Physical Instrument*, as such, hath a *Physical Causality*; but our Faith cannot have a *Physical Causality* upon Gods Act; whereby he Justifies us.

Let it be considered, that both our Catechisms, larger and lesser, affirm Justification to be an Act of God. Now how an Act of ours, such as Justifying Faith is, can have a Physical Causality, and Influence, upon the producing of an Act of God, is above our comprehension. Sure we are, that if any Man will maintain such an Opinion, he ascribes more to Faith in the point of Justification, than we dare do. We should rather think, that the Instrument, which God uses in producing his own Justifying Act, is his own Gospel promise of Pardon and Justification to the penitent Believer, for the sake of Christ, in whom he believes.

*Object.* But doth not the second Article of the II Chap. of the Confession of Faith, say expressly, that Faith is the alone Instrument of Justification?

*Ans.* 1. And so say we too: It is the alone Instrument, the alone most federal Instrument, or the alone receptive, applicative Condition.

2. Distinguish between an Instrument immediate, and mediate. Now Faith is not said to be the alone immediate Instrument of Justification; nor do we conceive how it can so be in a physical sense; because it hath no immediate physical influence upon the producing of Gods Justifying Act. But Faith may be said to be the mediate Instrument of Justification, because it is the immediate Instrument whereby we receive Christ, and his Righteousness; & by *posse*, this being done, this Instrumental Means being used, and this Condition being performed, Christ and his Righteousness being received by Faith, as the Instrumental Means of that reception, God himself, for Christs sake, justifies us by his Law of Faith.

This seems plainly to be the sense of the Assembly, as appears by their saying in the passage of the larger Catechism, quoted by the Letter, *That Faith Justifies a Sinner, only as it is an Instrument, by which the Sinner receiveth, and applies Christ and his Righteousness.* Mark the Expression, They do not say, that Faith Justifies only, as an Instrument whereby God Justifies the Sinner; but onely, as an Instrument whereby the Sinner receives, and applies, Christ and his Righteousness.

If the Author of the Letter have any other Notions of Faith's being a Physical Instrument, much good may they do him; but let him not think to impose them upon us, or upon the Words of the Assembly: We take their Words in the sense they are capable of, without self contradiction. For we have more respect for that Reverend, and learned Synod, than to put a sense upon their Words,



Words, they are not fairly capable of, nor that shall make them speak Contradictions. Therefore as they hold Faith to be *both an Instrument, and a Condition* to do us: We hold it to be an Instrument, as that its being an Instrument, shall not hinder it from being a Condition. And so to be a Condition, as that its being a Condition, shall not hinder it from being an Instrument. This we take to be the plain and native sense of the Assembly; and in this sense we heartily assent to their Words. But so doth not our Author; for in the 9th. and 13th. Pages of his Letter, he saith, that Faith is *neither Condition, nor Qualification; but a meer Instrument*: Whereas the Assembly saith expressly, both that Faith is a *Condition*; and also, that it is an *Instrument*. Therefore he contradicts the Assembly: and doth not take their Words in their plain and native sense. For had he taken them as we do, and always did, what reason had he to make such a clamour; and with what Conscience did he tell the World that his Brethren, the Nine confederates (especially the younger sort of them) were dangerously erroneous in the Fundamental point of justification?

In a right manner wish him to traduce the faithful Ministers of Christ? For our parts, we shall not have done to by him, or any of his Consorts, without as clear evidence as a matter of fact, of their nature, is capable of, and without producing our evidence too; which he hath not done in his Letter, nor is it possible to be done; for the matter of fact is most certainly, and evidently false. And we would yet hope, that he will have a better opinion of his Brethren, and be sorry for the wrong he hath done them, when he shall understand that they are far from being the Men he affirmed them to be; and that they willingly accept of the Test, which he himself offers, in order to an Agreement; not as if they had *changed their Godheads*, upon the reading of his Letter (which is more likely to make Profelytes of weak well meaning Women, than of Men of understanding) but because they were of the same Judgment before, and now declare it, that the World, and he, may see how injurious he hath been to his Brethren.

But though we are willing to agree with him, in the foresaid Articles of the Assemblies Confession of Faith; yet it is upon Condition, that he will assent to the Assemblies Words, in their plain, and genuine sense aforesaid, as we also do: And that this shall not be accounted an agreement with him in all the rest of his Letter. For we hope, by the help of our God and Saviour, never to agree into many things in his Letter, because they are neither consistent with the purity of Faith, nor with the sincerity of Love.

We are indeed willing that it should be known, to the real and right Antinomians, that he is none of them; if he will stand to several Passages in his Letter; particularly, to what he writes in the end of the 4th. and in the 13th. Pages, again in the end of the 23d., and beginning of the 24th. Pages, as also in Page 49. Line 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28. And for our parts, if he would be *consistent with himself*, and not contradict what he there owns for Truth; we should be willing and ready, as we have occasion, to vindicate him from being an Antinomian in Principle; but we cannot acquit him from being an Antinomian in Practice, so long as it is written in our Bibles, [Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy Neighbour:] And so long as he approves of those Passages in his Letter, whereby he has falsely accused, and traduced his Brethren, and represented them to the World, as Arminians, and Pelagians, and Teachers of a new Gospel.

It is none of our business to persuade any Body to believe that he is a real Antinomian.

Antinomian in Principle; but it is to Vindicate our own innocency, by wiping off those most false, and foul Aspersions, he hath cast upon the Lords Ministers; and to correct some of those gross mistakes, that occur up and down in his Letter; and to let People see, that some have been too forward to receive for truth many things which he hath presented them with in his Letter.

This is that, which we design in Animadverting upon his Letter, and our Method in doing it, shall be;

*First*, In the first Chapter to consider of the Occasion, and Design of his Letter.

*Secondly*, In the second Chapter, divided into several Sections, to refute some of his Doctrinal Errors against the purity of Faith.

*Thirdly*, In the third Chapter, to shew that we cannot approve his ridiculous way of Converting Unbelievers, and bringing them to Faith in Christ.

*Fourthly*, In the fourth Chapter, to refute his Calumnies, and false Accusations of Christs Ministers, against the sincerity of Love.

*Lastly*, In the fifth Chapter, to advise Christian People to try before they trust, and not to suffer themselves to be imposed upon, and lead into error by the bold, unproved Assertions and Dictates of any Preachers, or Writers whatsoever.

## CHAP. I.

### Concerning the Occasion and Design of the Letter.

**F**irst of all, We will consider the Occasion and Design of his Letter. And for the Occasion of his Writing it, he saith, It was a Countrey Ministers earnest desire of information about some difference amongst Non-conformists in London, which was the cause of it: We suppose, he means the occasional cause. And if this be true, we allow it for a lawful occasion of writing a Letter of Information to his Friend and Brother in the Countrey, provided his Information had been true; but nothing can ever make it lawful to give false information to any, either in City or Countrey. Whether, he hath done so, or not, by his Letter will appear by what follows in this Answer.

Next, for his design in writing, he saith, in Page 35. That, *All his design in publishing that Letter, was plainly and briefly to give some information to ordinary plain people, who either want time, or judgment, to peruse large and learned Treatises, about the point of Justification, wherein every one is equally concerned.* We do not believe this to be true, yea we think it is not true: For surely it was part of his design to give a fuller information to his Brother in the Countrey, who, being, as he saith, a Minister, we presume he is none of the plain ordinary people, who want time, and judgment, to peruse large, and learned Treatises, &c.

We do not think, that he first sent the whole Manuscript in a private Letter, into the Countrey, to inform a Minister; and afterwards printed it, to inform the People, that want time and judgment: But that if he did really write a Letter into the Countrey, it was but a small part, it may be *See Lett. p. 27.* some of the Heads of it; and then published the whole with a design

design to inform, and to alarm too, both Ministers and People in City and Countrey.

And whether this be so, or not, yet we cannot believe that *All his design* in publishing his Letter, was plainly, and briefly to give some Information to the People about the point of Justification. For he plainly manifests, throughout his Letter, that a *part of his design* in writing, was to vindicate himself, and some of his Party, from the suspicion of Antinomianism, and to load other Ministers, who differ from him in some things, with the odious charge of Arminianism and Pelagianism; and to warn the People, upon their peril, to have a care of such Ministers (as preach the necessity of Repentance in order to pardon of sin,) that they be not corrupted by them, in most Fundamental points of Religion. Let any body of common understanding, but read Pages 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 13, 15, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30. of the Letter, and he cannot but see, that the main design of the Writer was to clear himself, and his Party, of the suspicion of Antinomianism, and to bring the other Ministers, who are not of their mind in all things, under the suspicion of Arminianism and Pelagianism. This seems plainly to have been his *principal design*; and therefore he knows well enough, that it is not true, That *all his design* in publishing his Letter, was to inform ordinary plain People, about the point of Justification.

If he will yet say that, it was *All his design* in publishing his Letter to inform the People, that want Judgment to peruse learned Treatises, we hope no body, that do not love to be deceived, will believe him. But, if any should believe him, we would ask them; was not he then a *wise Informer* of the injudicious People, to tell them of the *matter and form* of Justification; and that it is the believing Christs Righteousness to be the *matter*, and not only the meritorious cause; and the imputation of it to be the *form* of Justification, which differenceth us from the Papists, who own the rest of our Doctrine in the point of Justification, (as the simple People must be made to believe,) but err in their notions about the *matter and form* of it?

Further, we ask, Was he not a *wise Informer* of the ignorant People, to tell them, Page 13, That God blessed England with a *Bradwardine*, since a popish Priest can demonstrate before any indifferent Persons of understanding in those matters, that *Bradwardine* was of the popish opinion, both as to *matter and form*, of Justification; and that he was a downright Papist in that point; and held Justification, *not by Christs imputed righteousness, but, by infused grace and inherent holiness*; as shall be hereafter manifested from his own exprels Words.

A *wise Informer* indeed of the injudicious People, to tell them of a *Bradwardine*, who was so subtil, so Metaphysical, and Mathematical in his way of Writing, that he was commonly called *The profound Doctor*; and to tell them too, that he was a *blessing to England*, who held Justification by *inherent Righteousness*; And yet at the same time to tell them, that it is a most dangerous, damnable error, inconsistent with the Glory of Gods Free Grace in Justification, and destructive to the Souls of Men, to believe that which *Bradwardine* believed, and professed; or to differ from him, and his Party, in a matter far less than that, even about the *form* of Justification, which Dr. Owen confesseth hath *no formal cause* at all; but something in stead of it.

But, it may be, some will say, that he had *no design at all*, in publishing those parts of his Letter, but that they dropt from his Pen by meer accident. If any

Owen of Justification, pag. 291, 292.

should this Apologie for him; there needs no more to consume the time; but let us turn to, and read Pag. 6. Lin. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. of his Letter, and *Pag. 90* throughout: For there it is, as clear as the Light in Noon-day, that his design in publishing those parts of his Letter was to bring us under the suspicion of Popery, Arminianism, and Pelagianism; that we agree with the Papists and they with us, in the point of Justification; and that both in that and other points, we are Arminians, and Pelagians; and that in all we are Corruptors of the Gospel in the main points of it, in the points of necessary saving Faith; and that we have *Twiss* and *Ames* against us, and not them onely; but we have *Doctorem profundum*, the profound Doctor *Bradwardine* for our Adversary, even that Doctor, who prayed to God in these Words, *Eximie Domine, Judica causam nostram, & sustinentem te sustine*, &c. *Arise, O Lord, Judge between us; and uphold me; who uphold thee*, &c. You may see, who we are told, is against us; not an ordinary Doctor, but a Doctor that upheld and sustained the *Lords himself*; or else he put up a very proud, blasphemous Prayer to God. Yet, he saith, it was so far accepted, that thereupon he fell asleep, and in a Dream was carried up into the Air, where he met with Pelagius, sought him, threw him down to the Earth, and broke his Neck. *in quo est modus, quod est magis*

We need say no more, to prove that it was part of the Writer of the Letters design, to insinuate his Friend, the Countrey Minister, and other Ministers likewise, that we are leavened with Popery, that we are Arminians and Pelagians; and that, as we have *Twiss* and *Ames*, so we have the profound *Bradwardine* against us: And therefore it must be an untruth, That *All his design*, in publishing his Letter, was to give some Information unto the injudicious People, about the point of Justification.

That it was a part of his design, to inform the injudicious People, we do not deny, and how judiciously he hath done it, let them that can, judge; but that that was *All his design*, we have shewed reason why we cannot believe: We doubt not but he designed, *Populo in plures, qui fecisset Judas*, to gratifie those People, who are disaffected to us, with his stories of our being Arminians, Pelagians, and Corruptors of the pure Gospel of Christ, and of the Doctrine of Gods Free Grace in the Justification of Sinners by Faith in Christs Blood. Now whether this was an honest design, or no, we shall refer to the judgment and conscience of all unbiassed, unprejudiced Persons after they have heard and considered what we have said for our selves.

We think it is self-evident also from his Letter, that it was a part of his design, to clear himself, and his Party, from the suspicion of Antinomianism and Libertinism. See Pag. 3, 4, 5. of the Letter, where at the end of the 4th Page, in the name of his Party, he confidently protests before God, Angels, and Men, that they espouse no new Doctrine about the Grace of God and justification, and the other coincident points, but what the Reformers at home and abroad did teach, and all the Reformed Churches do own. And in page 5, gives in a brief Summary of their Doctrine, after which, at the end of the page, he raises those Questions, *What is there in all this, to be offended with? Is not this enough to vindicate our Doctrine from any tendency to Licentiousness?* And pag 39. there are his own express Words, But how unjustly this hateful Name (*Antinomianism*) is charged upon the Orthodox Preachers, and sincere Believers of the Protestant Doctrine of Justification by Faith only. — Is the design of this Paper to discover. Now, this solemn pro-

clamation.

Man is a low fellow, but a sum of seven millions, whose Impulsive Demands, when taken together with his own Confession in formal express words, do manifestly show, that a nation, his dearness to clear himself, and his safety, from the suspicion of Antislavery and Liberatorism. And we heartily wish, that he had no worse design, than this. For we freely acknowledge, that any nation, or party, who do, and themselves unawily suspected of, and charged with horrid crimes, whereas they know, themselves not to be guilty, may, and ought to clear themselves the best way they can; and if they cannot do it by Words, they may very honestly do it by Writing: provided that, in clearing themselves, they do not falsely accuse others, and do fall into the same fault, which they blame others for, which if they do, assuredly, they take wrong measures; for all considering Men will be apt to suspect them more than ever of Liberatorism, when they plainly see that they run themselves into Libertine practices, in order to clear their lives of Liberator principles.

But after all the harshness of his Party, their being falsely accused of Antinomianism, and that they could no longer be silent; but must speak. Let us go to, and write in their own defence, and in defence of the Gospel. *Let us go to, and write in their own defence, and in defence of the Gospel.* We are at a disadvantage, whether they are that so accused them. We can find no such thing in Mr. Williams' Book, nay we find that in it, which clears the chief of them of the charge of Antinomianism. At the beginning of the Digression Concerning the necessity of Reference to the grounds of Sin, pag. 23, which are Mr. Williams' Words, *My business is, this Digression is with Mr. Williams' Orthodoxy, Principles to wit, than the Antinomians; and here is one whom we know, as well as our Man in the World, to whom Mr. Williams said, before his Book was at all printed off.* This is said with respect to Mr. Williams himself; and here I endeavour to state, and make up the difference between him and Dr. Williams. Hereupon that Minister looked into the Digression, and read some part of it, which he liked so well as, thinking it might be very useful both to confirm Truth, and also to maintain Peace and Love among Brethren, that it was so, him once more (among others) which induced him to subscribe unto the Avowing of this truth and veracity in Mr. Williams' Book. This we know to be true, we know it as certainly, as any other thing in the World; and we mention it to show, that we did not suspect that Party (as our Author hath been pleased to distinguish them) much less did we accuse them of real Antinomianism. So far were we from it, that we were heartily glad to find that our Reverend Brother had expressly owned them to be Men of more Orthodox Principles than the Antinomians; against whom, and no other, that Book was written, and of it. How comes it then, that we so often affected, or insinuated, or pretended to be throughout the Letter, that we falsely accused them, and charge of Sin upon them with Antinomianism, and put them upon a necessary self-defence? We think we are wronged in this matter, and must think so till we see better proof than the bare word of this Author. One may of us had really been so unjust and uncharitable, as to accuse their whole Party of Antinomianism, and that without this Brother's fully to Recommend us be hath done, and to charge us, especially our younger Brethren with Antinomianism and Pelagianism? Where did he learn these Words? Is Surewartin in the School of Christ? For Christ hath taught us all, not to render evil for evil, but we lay upon Opposition that some of us had done, or other, I do not think wrong in this matter; which is unknown to us, and yet he has said, *adversus quosdam quosdam*



But if there was no such provocation given, then this Author was the most to blame, to fancy, or feign, that we had accused his Party of Antinomianism, that from thence he might take an occasion, to accuse us of Arminianism and Pelagianism. As for what any of us have, at any time, spoken or written against the Antinomian Tenents in Dr. *Crispi*, or such Books, we thought it did not at all concern them, as being Men of *more Orthodox Principles*. Tho' we could not be ignorant, that there was some little difference of Judgment between some of them; and as in some things, yet we did not think, nor say, that that difference amounted to Antinomianism on their side; nor could we have ever thought (till the Letter informed us) they would have said, that it amounted to Arminianism and Pelagianism on our side. But now we find we are mistaken, for they have made us know that they had not so good an opinion of us, as we had of them. Yet we had rather be mistaken in this, than in the other, that is, we had rather they should, without cause, think us to be Arminians and Pelagians; than that ever we should have just cause to conclude any of them to be indeed Antinomians. They tell the World, by the Author of the Letter, that they have been suspected. And we are afraid the late Writings of some of them, will increase the suspicion: But what ever suspicious Thoughts may be thereby raised in the minds of many; we will endeavour to hinder such Thoughts from settling in our own Minds, and still have the best opinion we can of our Brethren, till we see further what the issue will be. We do not then now account that Party to be really Antinomian (whatever Mens Thoughts may be of some particular persons amongst them,) and we hope, and wish we may never have cause so to do. The Author of the Letter, in their name, hath most solemnly protested, that they are not Antinomians, and we do believe it, nor so much because he says it, as because we have other evidence to ground our belief upon. For we have known very worthy Men of those who were formerly called Congregational, that have been, as much against Antinomian errors, as we our selves are. Such there are at this day, and such we doubt not there will be, when we are dead, and gathered to our Fathers. If then, by *his Party*, our Author mean the Reverend Brethren of that Perswasion aforesaid, we neither did, nor do suspect them as such. But, for all that, we are sorry, that some, who have made themselves of a Party, should have also made themselves to be suspected at least of favouring Antinomianism. This is the case of the Author of the Letter, who raised such a suspicion in the minds of some that truly loved him, by recommending Dr. *Crispi* Book (as Mr. *Williams* says in his late Preface, and we know it to be true) and by lending it to one, without giving the least caution against any of the errors in it. His own Conscience knows this to be true. And this might very probably raise a suspicion of him in particular. And we think he was concerned to have cleared himself, and expected that in his Letter he would have done it, by disowning some of the Doctrinal errors in the said Booke. But we are disappointed, for there we do not find that he hath so clearly disowned any of the Doctrinal errors in that Book, as that the People who want judgment (as his expectation is) can discern, that he hath done it. This we shall endeavour to make out from several passages in the Letter it self. As, Page 1. In Page two All that he saith against that Book is this. *There are many Expressions in it that we generally dislike.* Now this he might safely say, and yet not disown any, but in his heart believe every Doctrinal point in it.

There are many precious Truths ill expressed by some very Orthodox Divines;

and

and in such a case, we may well say that we dislike the way of expression, tho' we dearly love the Truth so expressed. We find that the Reverend and pious Mr. *Rymerford* in a Fast Sermon, preached before the House of Commons in the Year 1643. on *Dan. 6. 26.* saith, That the *Antinomianism* is *the Golden white Devil, a Spirit of Hell cloathed with all Heaven, Page 32.* and the *Notions of Free Grace.* It seems the Devil of Antinomianism did not appear white enough to our Authour in Dr. *Crispi* Book; but what if he had appeared in a better and whiter Drefs, what if the Antinomianism had been better expressed, how would the Authour of the Letter have liked it then? Truly for any thing he hath here said to the contrary, he might have liked it well enough.

It is true, in the end of that Paragraph he says, That *Error is often, and unhappily, opposed by Error under Truths name.* And we confess he may possibly apply one part of that passage unto Dr. *Crispi* Book; and we would hope that he thereby meant, that indeed there are Errors in Dr. *Crispi* Book; but withal we must say, that such an acknowledgment of Error to be in that Book, is too obscure to be discerned by the ordinary people that want judgment, and for whose use (he saith) he wrote his Book; and that because it is a general expression, which is true enough in it self, without respect to Dr. *Crispi* Book, and whether it be applied therunto or not.

2. In Page 26. he says, *We justly complain, that in their opposing of true Antinomian Errors, and particularly the alleged Tenents of Dr. Crisp, they hint that there is a Party of, &c.* Now, pray mark how warily he expresseth himself, and how tender he seems to be of the credit of that Book. He doth not say, (true Antinomian Errors, and particularly the Tenents of Dr. *Crispi*;) for then indeed he had plainly confessed, that there are true Antinomian Errors in the Book; but he only saith, [the alleged Tenents of that Doctor] by which Word [alleged] he may make some People believe, that he never meant there were any true Antinomian Errors in that Drs. Book; but that true Antinomian Errors are alleged, out of it by Mr. *Williams* and others, and that very wrongfully, as Mr. *Chamney* pretends.

3. In Page 24. he says, *It is not yet called in question by any, but that there is a decreed Justification from Eternity.* Here may be another Juggle, for these words (there is a decreed Justification from Eternity) are capable of the Antinomian sense, nay more, they are not fairly capable of any other sense; to understand them properly; For a decreed Justification, is not the Decree it self, but the object or effect of the Decree.

The Decree it self is from Eternity, but the object and effect of the Decree is in time, as Dr. *Twiss* tells us; and even common sense and reason may assure us of it. For the Decree being from Eternity, and the object and effect of the Decree being after the Decree, it cannot be from Eternity too, and if it be not from Eternity, it must be in time. And yet the Letter saith, that a decreed Justification (though it be the object or effect of the Decree) is from Eternity; which is the very Error of the Antinomians, who ignorantly confound the object and effect of the Decree with the Decree it self.

We are sure the Words of the Letter, bear this sense; yet we will not positively affirm that he meant them in this sense, because we would hope, though he hath said expressly that there is a decreed Justification from Eternity; that yet he only meant, and would have said that there is a Decree of Justification from Eternity.

ternity. If any now should object on his behalf, and say, *that the said words not only may, but must be understood of the Eternity of the Decree itself; and cannot be understood of the Eternity of the decreed Justification, which is the effect of the Decree; because of the distinction which follows, of a verreal and actual justification.* We can easily answer that if we our selves were true Antinomians, and durst so far dissemble, as sometimes to seem not to be Antinomians, we could make the opinion of Justifications actual existence from Eternity, consist well enough with the distinction of verreal and actual justification mentioned in the Letter. For we would understand it with respect to manifestation. Thus,

1. Justification, which actually existed from Eternity, was virtually manifested in, and by the Death, and Resurrection of Christ.

2. It is actually manifested, and is actual in manifestation, when one layeth hold on, and plead Redemption in Christ's Blood by Faith. And thus by different use of Words, a Man void of the fear of God, might joggle, and at different times, and upon different occasions might plead two contrary Parties, and make them both believe that he were of their Judgment. We do not say, that our Author doth so, only we wish, that he had not expressed himself so ambiguously, but that with more plainness, and simplicity, he had declared himself against those Antinomian Errors. Thus he had actually removed all grounds of suspecting him any more, whereas, as he hath carried the matter in general doubtful expressions, it may be to avoid the displeasure of some of his good Friends, instead of fully clearing himself, he hath left ground to suspect him still, that if he be not a real Antinomian, he is at least a Favourer of them, and one that would keep up his Interest amongst them; and therefore in speaking of Dr. Cripps Book, all that he says is, *that he likes not his way of expressing himself;* and that there are true Antinomian Errors *alleged* out of it, but not that there are any really in it, as also he grants to the Antinomians, that there is a *decreed* Justification from Eternity, which is as much as they desire: *for decreed Justification is distinct from, and is the object and effect of the Decree:* And so if Justification, as it is the object and effect of the Decree, be from Eternity; then the Antinomians and he are agreed in that matter, and both of them hold that not only the Decree of Justification (as of all other things) is from Eternity, but that Justification itself is from Eternity. We do not see how rotten of their Principles, can gather any other sense from his Words. But whether he used such Words as *is possible* to make them conceive good hopes of him, we shall neither affirm nor deny, but leave it to his own Conscience. And as the Antinomians may hope well of him, so will we too, but not in their way; we will hope, that he is not for the Antinomians, but for the Truth, and for us, notwithstanding his Ambiguous Expressions.

Now we have seen how well he hath cleared himself of the suspicion of Antinomianism, which he brought upon himself by his own Act and Deed. Let us next see how he hath cleared his Party.

We have declared already that we did not suspect them, much less accuse them of real Antinomianism, and so they needed no clearing with respect to us. Yet since the Author of the Letter hath told the World, that they were both suspected and accused, and since he hath undertaken to vindicate them, and to clear up their Innocency, let us see how well he hath behaved himself in this matter. And for this let us look into the Third Page of the Letter, where he thus writes,

As to the Party possessed of Antinomianism and Libertinism (in this City) it is plain that the Churchmen they are concerned, are more strict and exact in trying of them than offer themselves to their Communion, as to their Faith and Holiness before their admitting them; in the engagements laid on them to a Gospel-walking as their admission, and in their inspection over them afterwards. As to their Conversations, they are generally of the more regular and exact frame. Is it unaccountable to charge a People with Licentiousness, when the Charges cannot deny, and some cannot well bear the strictness of their walk? Then to confirm the Argument from the more than ordinary Holiness of their Lives, he says that they sincerely profess, that their godliness begun well, and is promoted by the Faith of their Principles: Here we have him pleading for his Party, that he hath lately associated himself unto, by an Argument that reflects on his old Friends, and casts Dirt on all the Presbyterians throughout the World. For the plain English of it is this, we and our Party are more Godly than you, our Churches are better constituted than yours, we are also more holy in our Lives than you, and this our Godliness and Holiness begun with the Faith of our Principles; therefore it is an unaccountable thing to charge any of us with Antinomianism. Now though we do not charge them, yet since they are by some body charged with it, or else this Author tells a great untruth; we should be glad to see them better cleared than they are by this Argument: For that upon which the strength of this Argument depends is begged, and not proved.

It is taken for granted, yea it is plainly enough asserted, that their Churches are better constituted, than ours, or than all the Presbyterian Churches throughout the World. And yet he knows that this is a thing in question, and that the controversy about it, is not yet decided; yea that most (we think) of both Parties in England, have agreed to leave it undecided, as it was; and have agreed unto an Union without the decision of it. We wish therefore that this had not been mentioned, but since he hath mentioned it, and laid stress upon it; we must refer him unto one, of whom he hath heard, and for whom, we hope, he hath yet some honourable esteem, and that is the Reverend Mr. Wood against Mr. Lockyer. Let him weigh well his Arguments from Page 127. to Page 168, and look forward into the Appendix, if he please. Let him consider also what the wise and peaceable Mr. Dabham saith of Mr. Wood, with respect to those very Arguments, in his Treatise of Scandal, London Edition, 1659. Page 92. The Reverend and most Convincing Writer Mr. Wood, &c. If those Arguments do not convince our Author, we leave him to please himself a while with his new chosen Opinions; but we cannot allow it to be a good Medium whereby to vindicate him; and his Party, from the supposed charge of Antinomianism.

He takes it for granted, nay he positively asserts, that his Party are generally more holy in their Lives. This is a very friendly Testimony; our Author may possibly think, that he hath deserved well of them by this: But we should think them to be wiser Men, than to esteem him ever the better Man for such a flattering like commendation of them. If an Enemy had done it, or if one less concerned had said so, it would have carried in it a better grace, and would have looked upon them with a better aspect. For our parts, we know who it was that said, God I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, &c. and we desire not, to imitate such; but choose rather to lay with the despised Publican, God be merciful to my Sinners, Luke 18. 13. He takes it for granted, that Mens appearing for a time more holy than

others, is sufficient to secure them from falling under the just suspicion, or real guilt of gross and dangerous Errours. We cannot be of his mind in this;

1. Because we read in History and Antient Writers, That *Tertullian* and *Origen* in the Primitive Church were Men of extraordinary Parts, and exemplary Piety, (as appeared both by their Labours, and their Lives in Times of great Persecution,) yet they both fell into some gross and dangerous Errours.

*See Vincencius Lirinensis  
against Heresies, from Chap.  
23 10. 25. Edit. Oxon. 1631.*

2. Because in the Preface to Mr. *Weldes* Book of the Rise, &c. of Antinomians in New England, Pag. 3, 4, 5. we read, That at first They would appear very humble, holy, and spiritual Christians, and full of Christ; they would deny themselves far, speak excellently, pray with such soul-ravishing Expressions and Affections, that a Stranger who loved goodness, could not but love and admire them, and so be the more easily drawn after them, looking upon them as Men and Women as likely to know the Secrets of Christ, and Bosom Counsels of his Spirit, as any other. And this opinion of them was the more lifted up through the simplicity and weakness of their Followers, who would in admiration of them, tell others, that since the Apostles times, they were persuaded, none ever received so much light from God, as such and such had done, naming their Leaders.

4. As they would lift up themselves, so also their Opinions by gilding them over with specious terms of Free Grace, Glorious Light, Gospel-Truths, as belding forth naked Christ: And this took much with simple honest Hearts, that loved Christ, especially with new Converts, who were lately in bondage under Sin and Wrath, and had new tasted the sweetness of Free Grace; being now in their first love to Christ, they were exceeding glad to embrace any thing that might further advance Christ and Free Grace; and so drank them in (that is their Errours) readily.

5. See there their 5th. Sleight to spread their Opinions. And,

6. Mr. *Welde* says, They commonly laboured to work first upon Women — if once they could winde them in, they hoped by them, as by an Eve, to catch their Husbands also.

Whether our Author designed to imitate them when he lent Dr. *Cripps* Book to, &c. he knows best himself; we know nothing of his secret designs, but if he had any such design, we are heartily glad he missed his mark, and desire to bless God, that that worthy Person was so well stablished in the Principles of pure Christianity, as not to be moved, unless it were to an holy Indignation at some things in the foresaid Book.

7. Mr. *Weld* says, That as soon as they had thus wrought in themselves, and a good conceit of their Opinions, by all these ways of subtilty, into the Hearts of People; Nextly they strongly endeavoured with all the craft they could, to undermine the good Opinion of their Ministers, and their Doctrine, and to work them clean out of their Affections, telling them they were sorry that their Teachers had so misted them, and trained them up under a Covenant of Works, and that themselves never having been taught of God, it is no wonder they did no better teach them the Truth, and how they might sit still Dooms day under their Legal Sermons, and never see light. Our Author seems to have out done those Seducers in this black Art; for in the 32d. Page of his Letter, he says that the Divines, who differ from him, do plead that same cause, which the Devil pleads daily in the hearts of all natural men.

We are weary of transcribing, let any, who would see further into this Mystery of Iniquity, consult the Book it self, which is lately Reprinted: But we have made use of the first Edition. Here our Author may see the force of his Argument



Argument, taken from the *appearing Holiness of his Party*. For our Parts, we do not presume to censure his Party: we judge well of all Men, till we see good reason to alter our Judgment; and had much rather be severe in our Judgments upon our selves, than upon others: Nor do we more fear that the Congregational Churches in *Old England* will turn Antinomian, than they did in *New England*. There they opposed Antinomianism, and testified against it, and we hope they will do the like here. But we cannot but think, that what hath been once, may possibly be again, and as some, that were of our Brethrens Perswasion there, fell foully into gross Antinomianism, after they had for a time made an high Profession, and great show of more than ordinary Holiness; so may they do here: And therefore our Authours Argument from his Partys being (as he says) *more holy than ours*, is not (we judge) sufficient to clear them of all suspicion of inclining that way.

If any, in favour to us, should take the same Argument, (for it is a Leadon Dagger, and may be beheld which way Men will,) and apply it to our Party, (as our Authour is pleased to distinguish us,) and go about to prove thereby that we can be in no danger of falling into Antinomianism, or Pelagianism, or any other Heresie, nor can there be any ground to suspect us, because we are holier than our Brethren on the other side, or than any other people in *England*; we should never thank him for his pains, but rather rebuke him for his Flattery; and advise him to forbear putting Fallacies and Tricks upon the people in favour of us. We think there is none of us all, on one side or other, how holy soever; but might fall for a time into as gross Errors, as Antinomianism, if the Lord (to try us) should leave us to our selves, and the Temptations of Satan, transforming himself into an Angel of Light; *Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall. And thou standest by* 1 Cor. 10. 12. *Faith, be not high-minded, but fear.* We receive this advice from Rom. 11. 20. the Lord, and apply it to our selves; and we would hope that our Authour, and his Party, will do the like.

And we think they have one reason so to do, that is proper and peculiar to themselves, if they duly lay to heart how Mr. D. who went out from them, is turned aside from the Truth, and is drawing Disciples after him into Antinomianism. We need say no more to shew that this part of the Vindication of his Consorts is insufficient to attain its end, if his end really was to vindicate them, and not rather to commend himself to them by commending them to the World, as the holiest People in *England*. If in other parts of his Vindication, he hath had better success, and hath done them better service, we are glad of it; for we would really have them well vindicated, if they be (as he saith they are) suspected and accused. We verily believe, there are good serious People amongst them, that sincerely fear God, such we honour and love: And wish that theirs and ours were all such. And where the Churches are said to be so holy, we should be glad to find that all the Ministers were as holy, and that the Holiness of some of them did more appear than it doth in our Authours Letter, or in the late Writings of some others. If we should follow the example they have given us, in our way of Writing, we think we should have no great cause to tell the World of our Holiness. The God of all Grace, through Christ Jesus, grant that the great and precious promises of the Gospel may have a better effect upon us all, and make us more careful, and studious to cleanse our selves from all filthiness of the Flesh and Spirit, perfecting Holiness in the fear of God, &c.

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We have but one thing more to say on this part of our Authors Vindication, and that is: Whereas he says pag. 3. That *his Party profess sincerely that their godliness began with the Faith of their Principles*: We demand what Principles he means, whether the Principles of Christian Religion which are common to them and us with the other Reformed Churches, or certain Principles proper and peculiar to them, as a Party distinct from the rest? If the first, we have nothing to gain say to it; for we our selves do, with all our hearts, acknowledge that all the Godliness wherewith the Lord hath blessed us, did partly begin in, and partly proceed from the lively effectual Faith of the same common Principles of Christian Religion. But if our Author mean the second, to wit, That the Godliness of his Party began with the Faith of certain Principles proper and peculiar to them, as a Party distinct from all other Societies of Christians; we can by no means approve of their profession in that matter. Indeed we have a better opinion of our Brethren, than to believe that they ever made any such profession; and we cannot think, that our Author would ever sincerely, and heartily join with them in it, and so proclaim himself to have been an Hypocrite till of late, that he joined himself, in full Communion, with them. For we read in *Netheru* his Preface to, *Mr. Rutherford's Examen Arminianismi*, that he was accounted a pious, godly Young-Man, in the Year 1668, when he assented the said *Netheru* in the publishing of that Book of *Rutherford*. And though he hath lately gone off from his Principles, and we think from some Principles contained in that Book, both as to Doctrine and Discipline; yet we do not believe that he will ever acknowledge that he hath changed his Godliness with his Principles; and that as he hath got new Principles, so he hath a new Godliness, and that he never had any before. If we should be mistaken in this our charitable opinion of him, we should be sorry for him, and could not but fear that he is in as bad a case, as he fancies the middle-way Men to be in, who usually have a greater kindness (he says) Let. pag. 2. for that extrem they go half way to, than for that they go half way from. For if he should be found to have made such a Profession, that his Godliness began with the Faith of his new Principles, he is not soely gone the half, but (we think) the whole way to the extreme. And that (if it should be so) will help us to account for his being so unmerciful in his censures, and accusations of us, who had rather stop in the mid-way than to run with him into such extremes.

This puts us in mind of a passage in Mr. Patrick Hume's little Treatise, in the Book of Martyrs, Vol. II. pag. 188. Col. 2. to which the *Page 4.* Leuter refers us, and which we have read upon our Authors recommendation: The passage is this, [*Evil Works make not a Man evil*]. We hope our Author would not have us to understand these words just as they sound, without interpretation, or distinction. We honour the Memory of that blessed Martyr of Christ, and are willing to understand his words just as he meant them, and as they are consistent with the Truth of Gods, and things thus: Evil works do not make a Man first evil, because we are all evil by participation of the sin of our first Parents from our Conception and Birth, *John 3 v. 5. John 3 v. 6. Eph. 2. 3.* But for all that, we know very well, that in another sense, evil works do really make a Man evil, they make him gradually evil; that is, they make him worse than he was. If our Author do not see the Truth of this at a distance, let him bring it home to himself, and then we dare say, he will see the Truth of what we affirm, That evil works will make a Man evil.

evil; that is, worse than he was. For if not, then (1.) it must be either because he is so very bad already; that he cannot possibly be worse, and this, we hope, our Author will confess not to be true of himself; or else (2.) it must be, because he is already so very good, that let him do never so many evil works, they cannot make him evil; that is, they cannot make him worse than he was before he did them. Now we cannot think that he hath such an Opinion of himself: If we knew that he had, we should look upon him as a very dangerous Man to have any thing to do with; for he might do us all the mischief he could by lying and flandering; or otherwise, and yet be persuaded in his own mind, that he was never a whit the worse for so doing. He and we both profess to believe that all Gods Regenerate; Justified people are kept by the power of God through Faith unto Salvation; so as that they do not fall from Grace; either totally, or finally.

But we must profess for our selves, that it is none of our faith; that the Saints on Earth are already so confirmed in Goodness, that they cannot sin at all; or if they do sin, (as alas too sadly they have done, and frequently do!) that their sins do not make them evil in any degree, nor in the least, worse than they were, before they sinned. And we hope, our Author is not so far gone, but that he will yet join with us in this profession. For by this time (we think) he may see (if he did not before) the certain and evident truth of what we affirm, that evil works will make a Man evil; that is, if he be evil already, they will make him more evil, and if he be good already, they will make him less good, and to be less good than he should be, is to be in some degree evil. See the XVIth Article of the Church of England, which our Author, and we have all subscribed; as also the IIth. Article of the *Augsburg* Confession of Faith, and by both it will manifestly appear, that our first Reformers, even the *Lutherans* (by whom Mr. *Hamilton*, through the Grace of God, was fully converted from popery, and from whom he had that passage, that evil works do not make a Man evil) never thought that a good Man cannot do any evil works, or that if any Man, good or evil, do evil Works, they will not make him evil; that is, worse than he was before he did them. In all this we do not in the least contradict the true sense of the blessed Martyr Mr. *Hamilton*, but explain his Words, and give the true sense of them, as will appear to any Man of Judgment, that will be at the pains to read attentively what he says before, and after the Words we are upon. We should not have mentioned this, but that we are afraid lest ignorant, injudicious people (unto whom our Author recommends that little Treatise of Mr. *Hamilton*) should wrest the Words of a Holy Martyr, to countenance and encourage Libertinism; as they do wrest the sacred Words of the most Holy God himself, unto their own destruction.

We do not by this reflect in the least upon the said Martyr of Blessed Memory, but rather endeavour (as we are bound) to secure his good Name from any Reproach, which the Enemies of our Religion might possibly cast upon it, from a wrong, and wrested sense of his Words, as they are alwayes ready to do. This we have here provided against, by giving the true sense of his Words, which being rightly understood have nothing harsh in them at all; but otherwise taken, just according to the sound of the Letter, they carry a very scandalous meaning, which we dare say the Holy Martyr never thought of. We do not doubt therefore, but our Author will confess, that we have done right to the Martyr, and have rightly interpreted his saying, which he learned of *Luther*. But if

we happen to be mistaken as to our Author, and he will not admit this, if we have given of the fore said words, then he cannot be justly offended; if this be given as his Character, the Author of the Letter is one who holds, that no Man can make himself evil by doing evil, that is, he holds that no Man by doing all the evil, and mischief, that he is able to do, can make himself, in the least degree, worse than he was. And then let the World Judge, how well he hath cleared himself of the suspicion of Antinomianism, which he had brought upon himself. But we are really perswaded better things of our Author, though we thus write upon a supposition, which we hope he will never admit, but rather than admit such a supposition with its necessary consequence, he will join with us, and say, that *Luher* and Mr. *Hamilton* meant no more, but that evil works do not first make a Man evil, because ever since the first Sin of *Adam* and *Eve*, all meer Men, besides them two, are evil by Original sin, before they commit any Actual Sin. Thus much shall suffice to have said of the Occasion and Design of the Letter.

## CHAP. II.

### Of the Authors Errors in Doctrine against the Purity of our Christian Faith.

## SECTION I.

### Of his First Error, That there is no New Law of Grace.

**T**HE First Error against our Christian Faith, which we find in the Letter, is that there is no new Law of Grace, according to which the Lord dispenseth unto his People the Benefits and Blessings of Justification and Eternal Salvation. That we do not wrong him in charging him with this erroneous Opinion, is evident from his Letter, pag. 9, 18, 29. and pag. 30, 31. Where he saith, that Justification, upon the terms of the new Law of Grace, doth not agree with the found Words of the Reverend Assembly of Divines at Westminster; and that the new Law of Grace is a new word, but of an old and ill meaning. Thus he. And this the people must believe, upon his bare word, without any proof.

Now to refute this, we need do no more, but refer them, that desire to know who is in the right, as to this matter, unto Mr. *Williams* defence of Gospel truth, from pag. 18, to 34. where it is sufficiently proved by Scripture, by reason grounded on Scripture, and by the Testimony of Divines of the Reformed Churches. That there is a new Law of Grace, that the Gospel is that Law of Grace, and that it is a new Law of Grace in the same sense that the Covenant of the Gospel is a new Covenant of Grace. This Error then (that there is no new Law of Grace) being refuted to our hand, we might well pass it, and proceed to another. Yet because the Author discovers so much ignorance and hardness in what he says to the People, upon this point, we judge it expedient to insist a little upon it, both to instruct, and also to rebuke him.

And because he would make the people believe (whether he believe it of us, himself, God and his own Conscience know) that we consider God *only* as a Rector, ruling by a prescribed Law, in all his Purposes concerning and Dealings with the Children of Men. That he may not go on deceiving and being deceived. We declare to the World, that we never thought, spoke, or wrote any such thing, as he would fasten upon us, that he may the better misrepresent us to the people, pag. 9. at the beginning, to wit, that God is *only* to be considered under the notion of a Rector and Judge, as aforesaid. Where by the way, we cannot but take notice, how honestly he deals by our Reverend Brother Mr. Williams, in drawing this inference from a pretended Scheme of his Doctrines, [Thus (saith our Authour) they antedate the Last Day, and bold forth Christ as a Judge, rather than a Saviour.] Here the World sees, what Doctrine he fixes upon Mr. Williams. Next, Let them turn to pag. 56. of *Gospel Truth stated*, &c. and there they will find those express words of Mr. Williams, [He (Christ) treats with men as his Subjects, whom he will now Rule, and hereafter Judge:] Now cannot Christ be our Saviour, but by ceasing to be our Ruler, and cannot we be saved by him, but by ceasing to be subject to him? Where is that Man's Brains, who cannot see, if he will, that these two things do very well consist, that Christ is both our Saviour and Ruler, at the same time? But this only on the by.

We declare therefore again, that we never thought, spoke, or wrote, that God is to be considered *only* under the notion of a Rector, or Judge in all his Purposes concerning and Dealings with the Race of Man-kind. On the contrary we believe, that,

First, God, as an absolute Sovereign Lord, of his own most Free and Gracious Will and Pleasure, purposed to give, and accordingly gave his only-begotten Son to be the Redeemer, and Saviour of sinful Men, but not of fallen Angels.

Secondly, That God as an absolute Sovereign Lord, of his own good pleasure, and according to the Counsel of his own will, did before the foundation of the World, choose some, and not others, of the laps'd, and lost Race of Man-kind, unto the participation of Special, Effectual, Victorious Grace, and Eternal Glory, through Christ Jesus.

Thirdly, That in the first making of the Covenant, and enacting of the Law of Grace with us, through Christ Jesus, God did not act as a Governour Ruling us according to an external Law, which he had before made for us, but as a Sovereign, and gracious Lord, who had freely purposed to save us in such a way, by Jesus Christ.

Fourthly, That in giving the foresaid Special, Effectual, Victorious Grace to the Elect, rather than to others, God doth not act as a Rector, or Governour, according to a stated Law prescribed to us, and known by us; but according to the counsel of his own Will, and his hidden Purposes and Transactions with Christ concerning us.

Fifthly, But yet, in good consistency with what we have said, we do firmly believe, that God hath enacted, and constituted a Law of Grace, for bestowing upon us the subsequent Blessings and Benefits of the Covenant, such as justification and Glorification.

This Law God hath revealed to us in the Scriptures of Truth, by this Law he both obliges, and encourages us, to certain Duties; and also by the promises of it, obliges himself to justify and glorify us. For Christ sake, if we perform

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the Duties prescribed, and comply with the Terms imposed. It is with respect to those subsequent Blessings and Benefits of the Covenant; that we say, the Lord deals with us as a Rector, and Governour, Ruling us by a Law of Grace.

This Law is expressed in Holy Scripture, in several Forms of Words, as that, *He who believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned*, Mark 16. 16. And, *If thou shalt confess with thy mouth, the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raised him from the Dead, thou shalt be saved*; Rom. 10. 9. *Whosoever believeth in Christ, shall receive Remission of Sins*, Acts 10. 43. *Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish*, Luke 13. 5.

This is that which we mean by the Law of Grace; and our meaning is so plain, that any Man endued with common sense, and reason, may understand it. But our Brethren do not like the thing it self. And why, we pray, do not they like it?

1. Is it because it is called a Law? Why the Scriptures of Truth call it so expressly, Rom. 3. 27. *the law of faith*. Gal. 6. 2. *the law of Christ*. The Messiah's Law; *The Isles shall wait for his Law*, Isa. 42. 4. Or;

2. Is it because it obligeth to duty with a promise of blessing to the Performers; and with a threatening of misery and punishment to the Neglecters, Refusers and Despisers? If this be the reason, wherefore they like it not; then let them receive an Answer from the Lords own Mouth; Luke 19. 27. *These mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me*. But we have better hopes of our Brethren. Or;

3. Is it because we call it a Law of Grace? Why we call it a Law of Grace, because it really is so; it is a gracious Law. For it is a Federal, or Covenant-Law; that makes rich Offers of Grace, of Justifying and Glorifying Grace; and it is a means also, whereby the Lord conveys unto his People regenerating and sanctifying Grace; it is a means which the Lord hath ordained to bring his People to Faith, Obedience, and Gospel-obedience. Therefore it may well be called a Law of Grace. And we think none should, and especially our Angry Brethren, should not like it the worse, because we call it, and it really is a Law of Grace. They do not like the Covenant of the Gospel the worse, because it is called the Covenant of Grace; and why then should they like this Law of Christ, the worse, because we call it the Law of Grace? especially when we tell them, that this Law of Grace is the conditional part of the Covenant of Grace; it is that part of the Covenant of Grace, which respects the way of God's dispensing to us the subsequent Blessings and Benefits of the Covenant, such as pardon of sin, and eternal Salvation. And which not the Apostle, Rom. 4. 16. says expressly, *that it is by faith, that it might be by grace*. Or;

4. And Lastly, Is it because we call it a new Law? If that be it that displeaseth, why should our Brethren be displeased on that account, since they know (if it be not their own fault) that we call it the new Law in no other sense, than as we call the Covenant of Grace, the new Covenant?

This Law of Grace we speak of, is both new and old in different respects. It is new in respect of the Covenant of Works made with Man in his state of innocency: For that Covenant of Works was before this Law of Grace which came after, and therefore is comparatively new. Again, as we Christians have it, it is called new, because we have the newest, and clearest and last edition of it.

it. And as in these respects it is new, so in other respects it is old. It is old as the substance of it hath had an existence in the Church of God, ever since the first promise of Grace made to our first Parents after the fall. It is the *everlasting Gospel*, which hath been in the Church under *several* forms of administration, and will continue, in its newest and excellent form unto the end of the World. We here it is said by some, that the Command to believe and repent, with the promise of pardon to the penitent Believer, and the threatening of punishment to the impenitent Unbeliever, cannot be an Evangelical Law, because God doth not give unto all special Grace to enable them to believe and repent in obedience to that Command. We answer,

1. It shall be in that kind of it from being a Law, then, notwithstanding that reason, it is a Law to all Gods-Elect, for to them he gives, through Christ, the said special Grace.

2. We deny the Consequence, God gives not special Grace to the Non-elect therefore the Command to believe and repent, with the annexed conditional promise of pardon, and threatening of punishment, cannot be a Law to them. It may be, and is a Law to them, though the said special Grace is not given them. And whereas it is objected, that without such special Grace the Non-elect cannot obey that Law. We answer,

1. That their *corrupt*, their impotence is not *physical*, but *moral*, they cannot be cause they *will not*.

2. The Non-elect, to whom the Evangelical Law is promulgated together with it receive more Common-Grace, more light and power from the Lord, in order to their obeying his revealed Will, than they make a good use of. Hence the Professors of Leyden, in their *Synopsis of purer Divinity*, write thus concerning this matter, *Diligenter notandum est*, &c. It is diligently to be noted, that this Non-election doth not take away, or deny all Grace in the Non-elect, but only that Grace which is peculiar to the Elect. But that Grace which in various measures, it dispensed unto men by the administration of common Providence, whether under the Law of Nature, or under the Evangelical Grace, is not taken away by this act of Preterition, or Non-election; but is rather presupposed: because the Non-elect are left under that common government of Divine Providence, and the exercise of their own free-will. But this administration of common providence, always hath conjoined with it that communication of Benefits external and internal, which in perfect innocent nature was indeed sufficient to Salvation, as it is manifest in the reprobate Angels, and in all mankind, considered in our first Parents before the Fall. But in corrupt Nature so much remains, or is superadded to nature under the Gospel, that they are bereft and deprived of all pretence of excuse before the Divine Judgment, as the Apostle testifies, Acts 14. 17. Rom. 1. 20. & 2. 1. John 15. 22. — and else where. Thus the Professors of Leyden.

And Dr. Owen in his Discourse concerning the Holy Spirit, Page 198. says, That where special Grace and real Conversion is not attained (so wit by means of common Grace, of which he is there writing,) it is always from the interposition of an act of wilfulness, and stubbornness, in those enlightened and convicted. They do not sincerely improve what they have received, and faint not merely for want of strength to proceed, but by a free act of their own Wills, they refuse the Grace which is further rendered unto them in the Gospel. So much briefly, in answer to the forelaid Objection, which

which was cast into our way; and it being removed, we go on with our Author, who in Pag. 30, saith, That [*New Law of Grace is a new Word, but of an old and ill meaning.*] Very well! Here is a pretty Jingle of Words, and it may be he, or some that he knows, are much pleased with such Trifles; and if so, here they are sited. For our parts, we cannot see what should move him to say, that the new Law of Grace is a new Word, of an old and ill meaning, but that either he himself was much pleased with the jingle, or else (which we rather think) he intended to please some of his Consorts, and to make them remember the thing for the sake of the little wit he had shewed in expressing it. And if that was his intended end, it is pity he should fail of obtaining it, and that People should not remember it for ever, for that reason (which will for ever hold true) that there was little wit in it. But you will say, How doth that appear? Why very plainly thus, There is little Wit, and less Grace, in boldly asserting a notorious Falsehood, in matter of Fact, in the Face of a learned Age! But this the Author of the Letter hath done, in asserting, that *new Law of Grace is a new Word of an old, but ill meaning.* To prove this, it being matter of Fact, there needs no more, but to shew from the Testimony of credible Witnesses, who lived many Hundred Years agoe, that the Words are not new, but were used in the Christian Church in a good sense and meaning long before we were born. Without doubt we might bring Multitudes of Witnesses, from among the Ancient Writers of the Church, to prove this matter of Fact, if it were needful; but we shall content our selves with a few, whereof some are such as our Authour cannot in reason except against, because he himself hath suborned them to bear witness (and that false witnesses too) for him, against us.

We have shewed already that the Apostle Paul expressly calls it, *the law of faith*, Rom. 3. 27. And says that it is of faith, that it might be by grace, Rom. 4. 16. And that is as much as if he had said, both together in one place, that it is the Law of Grace.

We will pass the Testimony of Ignatius, though in his Epistle to the *Magnesian* he expressly mentions the Law of Christ; because it is disputed that his Epistles, even those of best credit, have been much interpolated and corrupted:

And our cause needs not the Testimony of suspected Witnesses.

*Paris Edit. An.* Therefore after Blessed Paul, we begin with Justin the Martyr, 1635. p. 228. as our first Witness. That blessed Martyr, in his Dialogue with

Trypho the Jew, writes thus, Νυν δὲ ἀρχίζω τῶν λόγων, &c.

But now, — for I have read, O Trypho, that there shall be a latter or after-law, and a Testament, or Covenant, of the greatest, or most excellent Authority of all, which Testament, or Covenant, now all men must keep, whosoever they be, that would obtain possession of the inheritance of God. For the Law that was given in Horeb, is now old, and concerns you Jews only; but this after-law concerns all men, absolutely and universally. And when one Law is set against another Law, the latter disannuls the former. Again, in the same Page, Justin saith, ἐν τῷ ἔργῳ, &c. by the works, (or gracious effects) and the power which follows, or accompanies it,

Pag. 231. All may understand, that this is the New Law. Afterwards he  
 Pag. 251. calls Christ the New Law giver. And he says, Ye Jews deceive your selves by equivocal Words or Speeches, for where the Law of the Lord is said, to be faultless, ye expound it not, of that Law which was to come after, but of the Law given by Moses, τὸ αἰὶν ὄντος, καὶ οὐ καὶ μετὰ τὸ αἰὶν ὄντος. God loudly saying, that he would make a new Law, and a new Covenant.

Thus

Thus did *Justin* assert a new Law above fifteen hundred Years ago; for he wrote his Apology for the Christians, and Christian Religion, to *Emperour Pbi* the Emperour, in the Year 150, and about the Year 163, he sealed the Truth of the Gospel with his Blood.

Our next Witness is *Cyprian*, who also sealed the Truth with his Blood, about the middle of the Third Century, that is above Fourteen Hundred Years ago.

This Holy Martyr, in his Fifth Epistle to the Martyrs and Confessors, several times calls it, *Evangelicæ Lex*, The Law of the Gospel.

Again, In the first of his Three Books of Testimonies against the Jews, to *Quirinus*, His 10th Chapter is, *Quod Lex nova dñi habetur*, that a new Law was to be given; which he proves by these Testimonies of Holy Scripture, *Mic. 4. 2. Ysa. 2. 3. Matth. 17. 5.* His 11th Chapter is, *Quod dispositio alia Testamentum novum dari habetur*; that another administration, and a new Testament, or Covenant, was to be given; which he proves from *Jer. 31. 31, 32, 33, 34.*

His 12th Chapter is, *Quod iugum vetus evacuaretur; & iugum novum daretur*, that the old yoke should be made null and void, and that a new yoke should be given; which he proves from *Psal. 2. 1. 2. 3. Matth. 11. 28, 29, 30.* These Passages, cited out of *Cyprian's* Works, manifestly shew, that as he expressly called the Gospel a Law, and a new Law, so he held it to be a Law of Grace: For he says, that though it be a new yoke laid upon us, yet it is a light yoke, and an easie burden.

After *Cyprian*, his Country-man *Augustin*, that famous Light of the Christian Church in *Africa*, shall appear to give in his Testimony to the foresaid matter of Fact.

Thus then he writes in the 18th. Chapter of his Book, concerning Grace and Free-will, *Hæc præcepta charitativè darentur hominibus, non habentibus liberum arbitrium: Sed quia per legem dantur & veterem & novam, &c.* These Commandments of Love (saith

Lib. de Grat. & Lib. Arbit. cap. 18.

*Augustin*) would be given in vain to Men, if they had not free will: But because they are given both by the old and new Law, (although the Grace is come in the new, which was promised in the old, but the Law without Grace is a killing Letter, whereas in (or with) Grace, it is a quickening spirit) whence is in men the love of God and our Neighbour, but from God himself? This passage out of *Augustin* we have faithfully transcribed, and truly translated. Now it is well known, that *Augustin* lived, and dyed, above Twelve Hundred Years ago; and he saith expressly, that the Law of Christ, which we are under, is the New Law, and he proves this new Law to be a Law of Grace. So that New Law of Grace, is so far from being a new Word of an old, but ill meaning, that it is a considerable time above 1200 hundred Years ago, since the Learned and Holy *Augustin* used the Word in a very good sense, and meaning. Again, the same Father, in his Book, *De Spiritu & Verbo* to *Marcellinus*, de *Spiritu & Verbo*, Cap. 14. saith, The Letter of De Spiritu & the Law forbidding Sin; doth not justify any Man, but rather kills him by increasing Concupiscence, and accumulating Iniquity through privation: (*Nisi liberet Gratia per legem fidei, quæ est in Christo Jesu*) Unless Grace deliver him, or set him free by the Law of Faith, which is in Christ Jesus. Here again, *Augustin* saith, that we are freed from death by a Law, that that Law is the Law of Faith; that that Law of Faith is a Law of Grace, for by that

Law,

Law, Grace from sin from death : And likewise gives us plainly to understand, that this gracious Law is a new Law, for he says it is the Law of Faith, which is in Christ Jesus. Now it is clear, that the Law of Faith in Christ already exhibited in the Flesh, crucified, dead and buried, raised from the Dead, glorified, and appointed to be Lord of all, and Judge of Quick and Dead, much perfect, and become the Author of Eternal Salvation to all them that come unto it, must needs be a New Law, if we compare it with any Law that went before it. For before the coming of Christ, no Man was or could be, obliged to believe in him, as already Incarnate, Crucified, and Glorified : otherwise Men had been obliged to believe a falsehood.

And the same Fifth Century Salvian of Marseilles wrote his Eight Books of the Government of God, where he calls the Gospel the Christian Law. Book 4th pag. 120. Edit. Ox. *Christiana legislatio*. Sometimes he it better remarks, in the year 1639 of date of us, *miled Christians, the Christian Law a civil Law, as in reason of us.*

We might bring others of the Fathers for Witnesses in this cause, but for the present we will content ourselves with these, especially the first three, Justin the Martyr, Optatus and Augustin, who all call the Gospel a New Law. Our next Witness is Bradwardin, who though he be none of the Fathers, yet he lived above three hundred years ago; and our Author cannot in reason except against him, because he says in the 13th Page of the Letter, that he was a blessing to England; and he would make the World believe, that he is for him against us. Let us hear what he saies in this cause.

*Deus dedit hominibus talem legem, & quam legem, si non legem sanctissimam Christianam? God gave unto men such a Law, gem sanctissimam Christianam? God gave unto men such a Law, and what Law, but the most Holy Christian Law?*

Again, He thus argues, *Sic sola Lex Naturæ sufficeret homini, Sec. If the Law of Nature alone were sufficient for a Man unto all things whatsoever, wherefore hath God, who doth nothing in vain, even by his own confession, given another Law, yea other Laws, the old and the new, as what the first before, doth testify, especially since both these Laws, (to wit old and new, of Moses, and of Christ,) are more difficult to know, and hard to keep (than the Law of Nature.) For who that is wise doth anything by more means, which may be sufficient unto the fewer, as natural reason, and all Philosophers, unanimously testify? Especially if it may be done more discreetly or more, more profitably, and better by many means, than by few; which if it be true of positive Laws, and especially of the Christian Law, why do you not receive it, and hold it? Here Bradwardin expressly calls our Christian Law, a positive New Law, as distinct both from the Law of Nature and Moses. And in the same Page 64. he maintains that it is a Law with a condition of the greatest Reward, and Punishment imaginable. Sec. *Dei Summus Ordinator in maxima digne sit, Sec. He altho God, as the highest Ruler in his most great House, the highest Prince in his most great Principality, and the highest King of Kingdoms; wherefore then cannot he enact or ordain, that whosoever shall keep the Christian Law, shall receive Eternal Glory, and that they who shall not keep, but condemn it, shall be deprived of Glory, and shall incur Eternal Damnation; Surely he could do it, and he hath done it, as it manifestly appears both here said before.**

By this Passage it is as clear as the light, that Bradwardin held, that the Gospel



Gospel of Christ is a Law, with a Sanction of Reward and Punishment; and yet notwithstanding its Sanction of Punishment, as well as Reward, be held it to be a Law of Grace: as Augustin did before him; and as manifestly appears from the main scope of his Book *Of the Cause of God against the Pelagians*; and therefore we forbear to quote any more out of it at present.

From the premises it is clear, that above 300 Years ago, the *renowned Doctor Bradwardine* expressly affirmed the Law of Christ to be a positive new Law, with a Sanction of Reward and Punishment; and the Scope of his Book is to prove it to be a Law of Grace. And by all this, we think the World may now see, that the Author of the Letter told a great untruth, when he affirmed, that *The new Law of Grace, is a new Word, but of an old, and ill meaning*; and hence also People may learn what credit to give unto the Word of that Man.

From Fathers, and Ancient Writers, we will come lower down; and see what some of our Modern Divines, since the Reformation, have said in this cause; and first, when we look abroad, we find that the Professors of *Leiden*, in their *Synopsis of pure Divinity*, say expressly, *Dijp. 22. Thesi. 32* That Evangelium aliquando legē titulo insignitur, &c. The Gospel is sometimes called a Law, because it also hath its own Commandments, and its own Promises and Threatenings.

We find also, that the learned *Gomarus*, not only allows the Gospel to be called the Law of Grace, but likewise gives the reason why it is so called, in these Words, *Beneficii ratione, Evangelium, Gomari Opera par. 3. Diss. 14. Thesi. 30* *Secundum* *quod* *refertur* *ad* *nos*, *and* *because* *of* *the* *benefit* *promised* *in* *the* *Gospel* *in* *Holy* *Scripture* *is* *called* *The* *Word* *of* *the* *Lord* *Grace*, (Acts 14. 3.) *the* *Gospel* *of* *the* *Grace* *of* *God*, (Acts 20. 24.) *the* *Gospel* *of* *Peace*, (Eph. 6. 15. 11a. 52. 7. Rom. 10. 15.) *and* *the* *Testament* *or* *Covenant*, (2 Cor. 3. 6.) *And* *from* *the* *prescription*, *Evāg. est* *lex* *Dei* *or* *appointment* *of* *the* *condition* *and* *duty* *contained* *in* *it*, *it* *is* *called* *the* *Law* *of* *Faith*, (Rom. 3. 27.) *and* *the* *Law* *of* *God* *by* *way* *of* *embrace*, *or* *excellency*. 11a. 2. 3. And truly this was excellently said by *Gomarus*: No Man (we think) can give a better account, why the Gospel is called the Law of Grace.

And next when we look homewards again, and cast our eyes upon our own British Divines, we find the greatest of them clearly of the same mind, that the Gospel is a Law, in the sense before explained; it is the New Law of Grace. We will instance in two only at present: The first is *Bishop Andrews*, no Popish Bishop, (such as *Bradwardine* was, whom our Author quotes with such an Elogium, against us) but a Protestant Bishop, and a zealous Protestant, who held *Rome* to be *Mystical Babel*, and the *Pope* to be *Antichrist*, as appears from what he wrote in *Tortura Torri*, pag. 183, 184, 185, 186, 187.

Now this zealous Protestant, in his 17th Sermon of the Nativity, on *Psal. 2. 7*, writes thus, [We had well hoped Christ would have preached no Law; all Gospel, be. That he would have preached Bp. Andrews Vindicated the old Law, but not have preached up any new. We see it is otherwise. A Law he hath to preach, and preach it he will: He saith himself, Prædicabo Legem. So if we will be his Auditors, he tells us plainly we must receive a Law from his mouth. If we love not to hear of a Law, we must go to some other Church: For in Christ's Church (there) a Law is preached, Christ began, we must follow, and say, every one of us, (as he saith,) Prædicabo

Bishop *Impey* Christ will preach a Law, and they that are not for the Law, and not for Christ, will then quarrel about it (as she 3. d. verse) they would want of Christ, for this very cause, that Christ comes preaching a Law, and they would live lawless. They would endure no Yoke, that were the Sons of Belial. Belial (that is) No Yoke. But what agreement hath Christ with Belial? 2 Cor. 6. 15. — The very Gospel, hath her Law. A Law Evangelical there is, which Christ preached: And as he did, we to do the like. — Look but into the great Commission (by which we all preach) which Christ gave at his going out of the World. God (saith he, Mat. 28. 19.) preach the Gospel to all Nations, teaching them, what I have commanded you: — *La*, there is commanding, and here is observing. Page 162. being. So the Gospel consists not only of certain Articles to be believed,

but of certain Commandments, and they to be observed. Now (I know not how) but we are fallen clean from the term (Law;) nay we are even fallen out with it: Nothing but Gospel now. The name of Law we look strangely at: we shun it in our common talk. To this it is come, while men seek to live as they list. Preach them Gospel as much as ye will: but (hear ye) no Law to be preached, to hold or keep them in. And we have Gospelled it so long, that the Christian Law is clean gone with us. — I speak it to this end, to have the one term retained as well as the other, to have neither term abolished; but with equal regard both kept on foot. They are not so well advised, that seek to suppress either name. If the name once be lost, the thing is self will not long stay, but go after it, and be lost too. — The Christian Religion, in the very best times of it, was called *Christiana Lex*, the Christian Law. And all the Ancient Fathers liked the term well; and took it upon them. To conclude, Gospel it how you will, if the Gospel have not the Legalia of it acknowledged, allowed, and preserved to it; if once it lose the force and vigour of a Law: it is a sign it declines, it grows weak and unprofitable, and that is a sign it will not long last.

And Page 165. he saith, (1.) There is the benefit of this Law, what he doth for us. (2.) And then, what we are to do for him, our duty out of this Law. The benefit is the Gospel of this Law, the duty is the Law of this Gospel. And Page 166. They speak of Laws of Grace; this is indeed a Law of Grace; nay it is the Law of Grace: not only as it is opposite to the Law of Nature, but even because it offereth Grace, the greatest Grace that ever was.

This was Printed and Published in the Year 1624. and that was before most of us were born. And yet even then the Gospel was expressly called, the New Law of Grace, by Bishop *Andrews*; and therefore it is no new Word, which we have lately invented. And not only Bishop *Andrews*, who was every while as expert as our Author can be, in making a jingling noise with Words, which was more in fashion then, than it is now; but the famous Dr. *Twiss*, who was used to a Scholastick close way of reasoning, both says, and proves that the Gospel is a Law.

Therefore he shall be our last Witness in this Cause. Now in his Answer to an Arminian Book called *The Synod of Dort and Arles reduced to practice*, he plainly asserts, as we do, that God deals with Men not merely as an absolute Sovereign arbitrary Lord, but as a Ruler and Governour, according to a known Law in giving unto them, or withholding from them, the subsequent blessings and benefits of the new Covenant. His Words are these [Now like as the act of God's decree, is of the mere pleasure of God, no temporal thing being fit to be the cause of the eternal decree of God; in like sort the giving of Faith and Repentance proceeds merely of the good pleasure

pleasure of God. According to that, God hath mercy on whom he will, Rom. 9. 18. And to obtain mercy at the hand of God, is to obtain faith, Rom. 11. 30. But as for Glory and Salvation, we do not say that God in conferring it, proceeds according to the meer pleasure of his will; but according to a Law, which is this (whosoever believeth shall be saved;) which Law, we willingly profess, be made according to the meer pleasure of his will, but having made such a Law, he proceeds according to it. No such Law hath he made, according whereunto to proceed in the dispensation of the grace of Faith and Repentance.

In like manner the Dr. there distinguishes between the denial of Special Grace, of Faith, and Repentance, and the denial of Glory. As for the first, the denial of Special Grace to some, when God gives it to others, the Doctor says, that God proceeds therein according to the meer pleasure of his Will; but as to the second, his own Words are these, [As touching the denial of Glory, and inflicting damnation, God doth not proceed according to the meer pleasure of his will, but according to a Law, which is this; (Whosoever believeth not, shall be damned.) And albeit God made that Law, according to the meer pleasure of his will; yet no wise man will say, that he denies glory, and inflicts damnation on men according to the meer pleasure of his will: The case being clear, that God denies the one, and inflicts the other, merely for their sins, who are thus dealt withal. — And in the next Page [Like as God inflicts not damnation, but by way of punishment, so he doth not bestow Salvation, on any of ripe Years, but by way of reward. Yet here also is a difference, for damnation is inflicted by way of punishment for the evil works sake which are committed, but Salvation is not conferred by way of Reward, for the good works sake, which are performed, but merely for Christs sake.] Thus the Doctor in that Book.

And that you may see, that this Passage did not drop inconsiderately from his Pen, we will shew from another Book, which he wrote afterwards, that this was his settled judgment, and that he was firmly, and fully perswaded of this great Gospel-truth, It is Dr. Twiss his Answer to Mr. Hoard's Book, called God's Love to Mankind. [As touching the conferring of] Pag. 37. 38. Glory, God doth not bestow this on whom he will, finding men equal without any moving cause thereunto, even in man; for though there be no moving cause thereunto in man, of its own nature; yet there is to be found a moving cause in man, by constitution Divine, whereby God is, as it were, moved to bestow Salvation on some, and not on others. For God hath made a gracious promise, that whosoever believeth and repenteth, and continueth in Faith and repentance unto death, shall be saved; and whosoever believeth not, and repenteth not, shall be damned. So then, though Men are equal in original sin, and in natural corruption, and God bestows faith and repentance on whom of them he will, curing their corruption in whom he will; yet when he comes to the conferring of Glory, men are not found equal in moral condition; and accordingly God cannot be said in like manner, to bestow Glory and Salvation on whom he will. For he hath tryed himself by his own constitution, to bestow Salvation on none, but such as are in the state of Grace. Yet I confess, some say that God bestows Salvation on whom he will, inasmuch as he is the Author of their faith and repentance, and bestows these graces on whom he will: Yet certainly there is a different manner in the use of this Power of bestowing this, or that, on whom he will. For when God bestows Faith and Repentance, he finds them on whom he will, bestow it, up to them, and others; but when he comes to the bestowing of Glory, he finds them, on whom he bestows that, far better than others. — And a little after, [Albeit (saith he) God hardneth whom he will, by denying unto them, the grace of Faith and

and Repentance; yet notwithstanding, like as it is just with God, so inflict damnation upon them, for that sin, whether original or actual, wherein he finds them when the ministry of the Word is offered them: So likewise it cannot be denied to be just with God, to leave their infidelity and impenitence, wherein he finds them, uncured. But yet because God hath not made any such constitution, namely, that whosoever is found in his infidelity and impenitence, shall be so left and abandoned by him: Therefore he is properly said, as to cure it in whom he will, so to leave it uncured in whom he will, finding them all equal in original Sin, and inflicting of damnation, which is the second thing decreed in reprobation, there is always found a cause motive, yet and meritorious hereof, to wit, both of the denial of the one, and inflicting of the other. And God doth not proceed herein according to the meer pleasure of his will, and that by reason of his own constitution, having ordained that whosoever continueth finally in infidelity, in profane courses, and impenitency, shall be damned: And albeit on the other side it may be said, in some sort, (as I formerly shewed) that God saves whom he will, in as much as he is the Author of Faith, which he bestows on whom he will; yet in no congruous sense can be said to damn whom he will, for as much as he is not the Author of sin, as he is the Author of Faith. For every good thing he works, but sin and the evil thereof, he only permits, not causeth. And lastly, as God doth not damn whom he will, but those only whom he finds finally to have persevered in sin without repentance: So neither did he decree to damn, or reprobate to damnation whom he will, but only those who should be found finally to persevere in sin without repentance.

Again in the same Book, pag. 106. But I (saith Twiss) shall tell you the chief Flourish whereupon this Author (and usually the Arminians) doth insist in this his last Argumentation, I conceive it to be this; they hope their credulous Readers, unexperienced in distinguishing between God's eternal decree, and the temporal execution thereof, will be apt hereupon to conceive, that we maintain that God doth not only of meer pleasure decree whatsoever he decreeth; but also that he doth decree of meer pleasure to damnation: Which yet is utterly contrary (if I be not deceived) to the Tenet of all our Divines: All concurring in this, that God in the execution of the decree of damnation proceeds according to a Law; and not in the execution of reprobation only, but also in the execution of election; and the Law is this, Whosoever believes shall be saved; whosoever believes not shall be damned; and like as he inflicteth not damnation, but by way of punishment, so he confers not salvation but by way of Reward.

Again, pag. 184. [God hath not willed, but ordained, and made it a positive Law, that whosoever believeth shall be saved, and here hence it followeth that if all, and every Man, from the beginning of the World to the end, shall believe in Christ, all and every one of them, shall be saved.]

And Pag. 229. [As for Salvation, that is appointed to be bestowed, only by way of Reward of foregoing Faith, Repentance, and good works.] And a little after in the same Page, [Indeed our profession is, that Gods purpose is to bestow Salvation by way of Reward of Faith, Repentance and good works: and accordingly there is No other assurance of election, than by Faith and Holiness, as I Thess. 1. 3. Remembring the work of your Faith, the labour of your love, and the patience of your hope, knowing, beloved brethren, that ye are elect of God.] And St. Peter exhortes Christians to make their election and vocation sure, by joining vertue with their faith,

faith, and with vertue knowledge, and with knowledge temperance, and with temperance, patience, and with patience Godliness, and with Godliness brotherly kindness, and with brotherly kindness, love, 2 Pet. 1. 5, 6, 7, 10.] Thus Dr. Twiss speaks our sense according to our hearts desire, and maintains the Gospel to be a Law, as much as we do.

But now, it may be our Author will object that in all this, Dr. Twiss speaks only of a Law according to which God proceeds in bestowing, or not bestowing eternal life and glory upon Men, but not of a Law, according to which he justifies and pardons men. We Answer,

1. The reason of that was, because the Doctor's Adversaries gave him occasion to speak there of God's Law, according to which he glorifies, or damns men eternally, and not of the Gospel-law, according to which he either justifies, or not justifies Men. But

2. We say, that the Doctor's Judgment was the same as to both, to wit, as to Justification, as well as to Glorification; and that,

1. Because in his Answer to the forefaid Arminian Book, called *The Sound of Doom*, and *Aries reduced to Reason*, Page. 26. these are his exprels Words, *The free Pardon of Sin, and Salvation of Souls, are benefits purchased by the death of Christ, to be enjoyed by men, but have not absolutely, but conditionally, to wit, in such and such a case, then believe.* And Page. 28. *Men are called upon to believe, and promised that upon their Faith, they shall obtain the grace of remission of sins and Salvation; and these graces may be said to be offered unto all upon condition of Faith.* And Page. 189. *The Promises assured by Baptism, according to the Rule of Gods word, I find to be of two sorts: Some are of benefits procured unto us by Christ; which are to be conferred on us conditionally; — they of this first sort are Justification and Salvation. And Page. 190. Justification and Salvation is promised in the Word, and assured in the Sacraments upon performance of a condition on mans part. Nam the condition of Justification and Salvation, we all acknowledge to be Faith.*

And in his other Book against Hoard, *[Scribe Benefits (such the Doctor) are bestowed upon man only conditionally (though for Christs sake), and they are the pardon of sin, and salvation of the Soul, and Hoard p. 154. these God doth conferr only upon the condition of Faith and Repentance.]* All these are the Doctor's own exprels Words, by which it plainly appears, that his Judgment was the same, with respect both to Justification, and Glorification; and that he held, that God dispenseth to us both these benefits for Christs sake, according to a Law.

2. We say, that the Doctor's Judgment was the same as to both, because there is the like reason for both; and the Doctor's own Argument holds for the Law of Justification, as strongly as for the Law of Glorification; since God hath as much continued, and ordained, that all penitent Believers, and none (of ripe years) but penitent Believers shall be justified, as that all penitent, persevering Believers, and no others, shall be glorified. *[As it is written, John 3. All that believe in Christ the Son of God, is not condemned, but he that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in me. Acts 19. Of the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, Luke 23. 42. Ex. 23. 17. I will repeat, ye shall all likewise perish. Acts 2. 38. Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins. Acts 10. 43. Whosoever will give all the Prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins. Acts 13. 39. By him all that believe*



are justified, &c. Rom. 3. 25. God hath set him forth to be a propitiation through faith in his Blood. Rom. 4. 24. It shall be imputed to us, if we believe.

These Testimonies of Holy Writ do as certainly, and evidently shew, that God proceeds according to a stated Rule, and *standing Law* of his own making, in Justifying, or not Justifying Men: as any other Testimonies do shew, that he proceeds according to a stated Rule, and *standing Law*, in Glorifying, or not Glorifying Men.

3. We Answer, that our *wise* Accuser, in the end of the 18th. and beginning of the 19th. Pages of his Letter, seems plainly to be as much against God's proceeding according to a Law, in *Glorifying* Men, or not *Glorifying* them at death; as he is against God's proceeding according to a Law, in *Justifying* them, or not *Justifying* them before death: Otherwise we would fain know what he means by saying, [that the Doctrine of Conditions, Qualifications, and Restoral Government, and the distribution of Rewards and Punishments, according to the new Law of Grace, will make but an uneasy Bed to a dying Man's Conscience, and will leave him in a very bad condition at present, and in dread of worse, when he is feeling in his last Agonies, that the wages of sin is death, if he cannot by faith add, the Gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.] We profess we cannot see what our Author should design by this passage; but to reflect upon us as Subverters of the true Grounds of Christian Comfort, and as driving People to despair by our Doctrine of God's being a Governour and Judge, who distributes eternal

See Rev. 11. 18. Rewards and Punishments unto Men, who live in the visible Church, according to the Rule of the Evangelical Law, and as he finds them to be qualified through Grace, or not qualified; to have performed the Condition, or not to have performed the Condition; to have complied with the terms of the Evangelical Law, or not to have complied with them: We say, we cannot see what other design he should have therein, but thus to reflect upon us. And if this was really his design, then he denies that God proceeds according to a Law, as well in *Glorifying*, or not *glorifying*; as in *Justifying*, or not *Justifying* Men: And therein he opposes Dr. Twiss, and all our other Divines that he knew of, as well as us.

And further upon that Principle, that there is no such *stated Rule*, and *known standing Law*, according to which, God hath assured us, that he will either give eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord; or inflict eternal death: We challenge our Author to shew us, how in an ordinary way, without a Miracle, the dying disconsolate Man can be assured by Faith that God, for Christs sake, will give eternal life to him in particular, and not inflict upon him eternal death for his Sins. For if God hath not revealed in his written Word, to Men, that through Christ he will give eternal life unto all penitent Believers, and consequently to that dying Man in particular, if he be really a true penitent Believer: We say, if God hath not revealed this in his written Word, but kept it secret within himself, as a thing which he will give *whenever* as he pleases, without regard to any stated Rule, or known Law; how is it possible for the poor dying Man, without an immediate extraordinary Revelation, to know but that eternal death, which he knows he hath deserved, and not eternal life, which he cannot possibly deserve, shall be his everlasting portion? What depends upon the mere *arbitrary will* and pleasure of God, can never be known by Man, unless God reveals it, either by his written Word alone, or by his Word and Spirit con-

Man can have no hopes that God will reveal it to him by his Written Word alone; or by his Written Word and Spirit together; because according to the Principle aforesaid, the Written Word is supposed to say nothing at all of that matter: Therefore if ever it be Revealed to the Man, (and so if ever he be comforted) in this World, it must be by the Spirit without the Word: And then all the poor disconsolate Mans ground of Comfort must be reduced to this, That God will reveal it to him by his Spirit immediately without the Written Word. But then we demand how our Authour will be able to assure the poor disconsolate dying Man, that God will really do so, that God will reveal it to him by his Spirit immediately without the Written Word. For that immediate extraordinary Revelation being a thing that depends also upon Gods Arbitrary Free Will, he may do it or not do it as he pleaseth; and if God may freely not do it, how can our Authour ever assure the Man, that he will do it? That is, that he will by his Spirit immediately and extraordinarily reveal to him without the Written Word, that he shall have Eternal Life and not Eternal Death for his Portion?

But now if our Authour should say that God hath given unto Man a Promise in his Written Word to ground his Faith upon, though he hath not given a stated Rule, and standing positive Law according to which he will proceed with Man at Death and Judgment. We would readily reply thus, Either the Promise in the Written Word, made to the dying disconsolate Man, is an *absolute* Promise, that God for Christ's sake will give him Eternal Life, *however it be with him*, whether he be converted or unconverted, penitent or impenitent, believer, or unbeliever? And we are sure there is no such promise in the Bible, and to tell him of such a Promise, would be at once to belie God, and to delude the poor Man. Or

(2.) It is a *conditional* Promise, That God for Christ's sake will give him Eternal Life; if through Grace he unfeignedly repent of all his sins, and believe on Christ with a lively effectual Faith, a Faith working by Love; which he is bound to do under the pain of Eternal Death? If this be the Promise that the poor dying Man must ground his Faith upon, that God for Christ's sake will give him Eternal Life, then this is the very thing which Dr. Twisse, and we after him, call the *Law* according to which God proceeds in dispensing to his People the subsequent Blessings of the Covenant, such as Justification and Glorification are: And so our Authour comes over into our Camp, which he must do at last, and confess, if not to us, at least to God, that he hath grossly misrepresented and falsely accused Christ's faithful Ministers, and hath endeavoured to delude the People, and to render the Ministers odious to the People; and thereby to hinder the success of their Ministry: And he must sincerely repent of having done so. But if he will yet go on in the way of his own heart, we shall be sorry for him, and not cease to pray the Lord (if it be his will) to have Mercy on him, and to give him repentance for the *scandalous sin* which he hath committed in publicly slandering Christs Ministers, and in boldly asserting a notorious falsehood in matter of fact, saying, *That the new Law of Grace, is a new Word*, of an old, but ill meaning. And that he hath really done so, we have not only said, but proved by the plain testimonies of credible Witnesses, whereof two Sealed the Truth of the Gospel with their Blood, above fourteen hundred years ago.

## S E C T. II.

*Of his second Error that the Covenant of Grace is Absolute and not Conditional.*

SEcondly the Author of the Letter asserts that the Covenant of Grace is *Absolute* and not *Conditional*, as appears from page 18. at the end, and page 24. And particularly he denies that Faith in Christ is the Condition of Justification, page 8. [Some say that faith justifies as it is a fulfilling of the condition of the New Covenant, if thou be-

*though thou shalt be saved.]* This he finds fault with, and opposes to it, the old Protestant Doctrine (as he calls it) *That the place of Faith in Justification, is only that of a Hand or Instrument, &c.* Where we observe,

(1.) That he makes Faith its being a Condition, and its being a hand or instrument, to be two opposite things, the one whereof is inconsistent with and destructive of the other; and so in this he not only fights against us, but likewise against the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, who held Faith to be both an Instrument and a Condition in the matter of Justification, as was shewed before.

(2.) He makes it to be New Doctrine, and contrary to the Old Protestant Doctrine, to hold that Faith is a Condition of the Covenant of Grace, and that we are justified by Faith, as a Condition of the Covenant; wherein he makes the Assembly as well as us, to be Preachers of a New Doctrine, and Corrupters of the Gospel; since they likewise held Faith to be a Condition of the Covenant, as aforesaid.

And again in page 9. [*We say that Faith in Christ is neither Work nor Condition, nor Qualification in Justification, but is a meer instrument*] and he affirms that their saying so, is that by which the fire is kindled. So that (Faith he in page 10.) *It is come to that* or Mr. Christopher Fowler said, *that he that will not be Antichristian, must be called an Antinomian.*] Here it is very remarkable, that he not only denies Faith to be either Work, Condition, or Qualification in the matter of Justification, but he also in effect affirms, that it is Antichristian to assert that Faith is either Work, Condition, or Qualification; and that he will therefore rather choose to be called an Antinomian for denying, than to be an Antichristian for affirming it. This is and must be his meaning, or else he was dreaming, and knew not what he did, when he cited Mr. Fowler, and brought in his Judicious saying, with a *(It is come to that as Mr. Fowler said, &c.)* Finally in page 23, at the beginning, he says, that Faith in the Office of Justification is neither Condition nor Qualification, but in its very self is a renouncing of all such pretences. From all which it is plain, that we do not wrest his Words, nor charge him with an Opinion which he doth not hold; for he so firmly holds the Covenant of Grace to be Absolute and not Conditional, and particularly that Faith is neither the Condition of obtaining Justification, nor a qualification of the Person then justified when he believes, that he glories to be accounted an Antinomian, rather than renounce that Opinion, page 24. And he holds it to be New and Antichristian Doctrine to maintain that Faith is either a Condition of obtaining Justification, or a qualification of the Person justified or to be justified in that instant of time wherein he believes.

Before we refute this Opinion, we will briefly declare to the World what our Faith is in this matter. And,

First, We do not hold that there is any Antecedent Condition of the Covenant of Grace: Our meaning is plainly this, That there is nothing required to be necessarily performed by us as a Condition before the Lord will make us Partakers of any Grace, even of the first Grace of the Covenant. For we believe that the first Grace is given Absolutely, and the Lords giving of it, is not suspended on our performing of some antecedent Condition by our meer natural Strength; This indeed would be Pelagianism, or rather Semi-Pelagianism, condemned by the Ancient Church, and we condemn it as much as the Ancients did. We hold that there are Absolute Promises, Promises of Regenerating Grace, of the New Heart, the Heart of Flesh, of special Grace through which the Elect believe and repent. This is the Grace whereby we perform the Conditions required of us in the Covenant, and therefore it must be promised and given Antecedently to our performing those Conditions, inasmuch as it is the cause of the performance of those Conditions, and the cause must always be in order of nature and causality before the Effect. There hath been, and is some difference of Opinion amongst Orthodox Ministers about the Person or Persons to whom God hath made those absolute Promises; Some think they are made only to Christ for the Church according to these Scriptures, *Mal.* 49. 6. compared with *Acts* 13.

47. 28. and *Iſa.* 53. 11. *Pſal.* 22. 30. and 130. 3. Others think they are made through Christ, only to the Catholick Church, that God for Christ's sake would show special Mercy unto his Select People in all Ages, and add them to the Church: Mystical by saving Illumination, Regeneration and Conversion: And so that God through Christ hath promised unto the Catholick Church, that she should be a fruitful Mother, that should still bring forth Children unto God, which should continue the Succession unto the end of the World; as in *Iſa.* 54. 1. *Sing O barren, &c.* ver. 3. *For thy maker is thy husband, &c.* See also ver. 8, 10. and then consider the Promise, ver. 13. *That all her children should be taught of the Lord.* And compare that place with *Gal.* 4. 26, 27, 28, 29. We humbly conceive that the Absolute Promises of the first saving Grace, are not made immediately to individual Persons, but to the Body of the Church, to the Mother in behalf of her Children: Such are the Promises recorded, *Iſa.* 44. 3, 4, 5. *Iſa.* 59. 21. *Ezek.* 36. 22. compared with ver. 26, 27. and with *Heb.* 8. 10. These and all absolute Promises of the first saving Grace seem not to be made immediately unto, nor to be immediately pleadable in Faith by any individual Person before their first Conversion; but to be made unto the house of Israel, (as the Text expresseth) that is, unto the true Church which is the Mystical Living Body of Christ, in behalf of all the Children which she as a Spiritual Mother is to bring forth unto God: Or,

39. To Reconcile these two Opinions, and to reduce them into one, it may be, some judge it best to say, that the aforesaid absolute Promises are made both to Christ and his Church, as one Mystical Body consisting of Head and Members, which is to be filled up from time to time by adding New Members to it; and that continual addition of new Members is made by the fulfilling of the aforesaid absolute Promises; and for this may be alledged; *Gal.* 3. 16. and this way we oppose not.

Thus it is confessed that there is some difference of Opinion about the Persons to whom the Absolute Promises of the first Saving Grace, are made; and we cannot help it; for it is not in our power to make all good Men to be of one mind in lesser matters, and we think we are bound in Conscience to bear with one another in love, notwithstanding such little differences. But we thank God that we are all agreed that the Promises of the first Grace are Absolute, so as to exclude the necessity of our performing any Antecedent Condition to make us capable of that first Grace.

And we desire it may be well remembered, That we say those Promises are absolute, so as to exclude any antecedent Condition, but not so as to exclude the use of God's appointed means for the obtaining of that promised Grace. We plainly distinguish between an Antecedent Condition, which is always and in all cases necessary to obtain the promised Grace; and the use of God's means appointed for the obtaining of the promised Grace; which use of means is indeed ordinarily necessary unto Men, so that they have no ground to expect that ever God should give them the aforesaid Grace, without their attending upon him in the use of those means; yet is not the use of them so absolutely necessary as that Grace at no time and in no case can be had without them: For though God hath tyed us to the means, he hath not tyed himself to them by any Law or Constitution, so that he can never give the first Saving Grace to any without the use of them. We know God hath been found of them that sought him not, so he was found of Paul and others, and so he may be again in these latter days if he please. God may give Faith and Repentance to a man absolutely in what way he pleaseth, he may do it in the use of means, or out of the use of means, (which is his ordinary way) because he hath not made the use of means, the Condition upon the performance of which he hath declared that he will always give it; and never in any case without the performance of it. Thus indeed it is in the matter of Justification and Glorification.—It is not consistent with the Truth of God's Word, and Perfection of his Nature to justify or glorify an Impenitent Unbeliever remaining such, because he hath declared that he will not, and it is not consistent with his own Honour that he should do it, but upon the performance of the Duty and Condition of Faith and Repentance.

But in the matter of *Regeneration and giving Faith and Repentance in the use of means*, God hath not so tyed up himself by any Declaration of his Will that we know of, but that he hath left himself at free Liberty as a Gracious Lord and Merciful Benefactor to give the Grace of Regeneration, Faith and Repentance when and how he pleaseth, ordinarily in the use of means, and extraordinarily without the Antecedent use of Means.

This we learn of Doctor Twisse who as he affirms frequently that the first Grace, and particularly the new Heart, Faith, and Repentance are promised and given absolutely, and not upon the performance of any Antecedent Condition, so he positively asserts that the said new Heart, Faith, and Repentance, are usually given in the use of Means, and not otherwise ordinarily. You shall have it in his own words. Thus then he writes in his Answer to the foresaid Book called *The Synod of Dort and Arles reduced to Practice*, page 195, 196. As God did ordain us to everlasting Life by way of Reward of our Faith, Repentance, and good works; so likewise he did ordain us to the obtaining of Faith, Repentance, and good Works, to be wrought in us, partly by the Ministry of his Word, therein speaking unto us, and partly by our Prayers, seeking unto him to bless his word unto us, and fulfil the good pleasure of his Goodness towards us, and the work of Faith in Power. For God doth expect, that we should seek unto him by Prayer for this, as we read, Ezek. 36. 37. Thus saith the Lord, I will yet for this be fought of the House of Israel to perform it unto them. Neither do we maintain that God doth ordain any Man of Ripe Years unto Eternal Life in any moment of Nature, before he ordains him to Faith, Repentance, and Good Works, and that to be wrought in him by the Ministry of the Word, with Gods Blessing thereupon according to the Prayers in common, both of the Pastor and the People. By this passage we see that though Dr. Twisse denies that Gods giving us Grace to Convert, Believe and Repent, doth depend upon any proper Condition to be antecedently performed by us before we can ever in any case receive that Grace; yet he confesses and maintains that ordinarily Gods giving that first special Saving Grace depends upon the use of his appointed means, and that it is Gods Will it should so depend. And truly if it were not so, Ministers should give over Preaching and Praying, and People give over hearing them, and joyning in Prayer with them, in order to Conversion; for it would all serve to no end or purpose, but would be a taking of Gods Name in vain. Thus it may appear to all, that we do not believe nor teach, that there is any Condition required to be necessarily performed by us antecedently to our partaking of the first Grace promised in the Covenant; so that if we performe that Condition, we shall infallibly have that first Grace, and if we perform it not, we shall infallibly not have it at all.

(2.) From hence it follows, that in consistence with our foresaid Principle we cannot hold, and we solemnly declare that we do not hold that there is any Natural Condition of the Covenant of Grace; for we know assuredly that there is no such Promise in the Covenant of Grace as this, *Facienti quod in se est viribus naturæ, dabit Deus primam gratiam*. God will give the first supernatural Grace to every Man who doth what he can by his Natural Powers. It was the Opinion of the Semipelagians, that we believe in Christ by our own Natural Strength without Supernatural Grace, and upon Condition that we do so, God promiseth to give, and accordingly he gives us the first internal Supernatural Grace. Augustin himself was once of this Opinion, as he confesseth; lib. de prædestin. Sanctorum, cap. 3. where he tells us that he was convinced of his Error by that of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 4. 7. What hast thou that thou hast not received, and if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it. We bless God for that by his Grace he hath preserved us from that Semipelagian Error, and we declare our abhorrence of it: And therefore it must needs be a great wickedness in the Author of the Letter to bely us as he hath done, in charging us not only with Semipelagianism, but even with Pelagianism itself, which are Errors that our Souls abhor, as God who searcheth the Hearts of all Men knoweth, and to whom we appeal, yet praying him again not to enter into Judgment with that Brother for the wrong he hath done us, but rather to give him Repentance, and then to pardon him.

(3.) From



(3.) *Expositione* also follows that we neither do hold nor can hold that there is any intrinsick condition of the Covenant of Grace. For we do firmly and unanimously believe that Christ by his Blood hath purchased for us, and by his Spirit freely gives unto us the Grace whereby we perform the Condition of the Covenant, the Grace whereby we sincerely believe, repent, and obey the Gospel. Now we are persuaded that it is utterly impossible for any Man to merit of God the benefits of Justification and Glorification by performing the Condition of Faith, Repentance, and Evangelical Obedience, because we are infinitely beholding to God in Christ for giving us freely the Grace whereby we perform the Condition, and without which we could never perform it. We know very well, that the Papists argue the quite contrary way that our Faith, Repentance, and Obedience are properly meritorious, because they are the effects of God's Grace in us, but this we know also to be a very ridiculous way of arguing, because the Argument really proves that they are not, and that they cannot be properly meritorious, because they are the Effects of God's Free Grace. God by giving us the Grace whereby we Believe, Repent, and Obey the Gospel, properly merits of us our most humble and hearty thanks for thereby causing us to Believe, Repent and Obey, and therefore, our so believing, repenting, and obeying cannot properly merit anything of God. But we need not insist on this, it being so evident in it self, and confessed by all Protestants that it is impossible for a meer Creature and that a sinful Creature too, properly to merit and deserve anything from God but Death and Damnation. And this being so, we do assert (as much as our Authour doth, page 24. or can possibly do), such an absolute freedom of the Grace of God as excludeth all merit. But what our Authour means by excluding not only merit it self, but every thing like merit, we do not well understand. As for the merit of a sinful Creature, we know it to be a *chimera*, that it neither hath nor can have a real being, that it is impossible and implies a contradiction. Now what it is that is like a *chimera*, we leave to our profound Authour to determine. But if by every thing that is like merit, he means every false conceit of merit that is or may be in the foolish Imaginations of erroneous men; we understand him and agree with him; for we do (as much as he) exclude out of our own imaginations all false conceits of merit, and if we could we would exclude them out of the imaginations of all other Men, that so we and all other Men might ascribe unto God through Christ the Glory of all the good we do, and of all the good we receive or hope to receive.

It our Authour by every thing that is like merit, mean any other thing, we are to seek what it may be, and truly we cannot well imagine what it is he excludes under the notion of its being like merit, unless it be Repentance in order to pardon of sin, and Prayer for pardon of sin; and if that be really his meaning, and he be of that mind that he will neither repent of his sins in order to obtain the pardon of them, nor pray for the pardon of them, for fear lest he should seem to merit the pardon of them; we cannot but think him to be a very weak man, and that he fears where no ground of fear is: For assuredly if he do but exclude out of his own mind the proud Conceit and Opinion of meriting by his Repentance and Prayer, he needs not forbear repenting and praying for the pardon of his sins, for fear of thereby meriting pardon, or for fear of doing that which looks like meriting pardon. His own common Sense and Reason may teach him that by the very acts of repenting and praying for pardon, he doth renounce all pretence to merit as well as by the Act of believing in Christ for pardon, he doth renounce all pretence to the meriting of his pardon.

(4.) We do not believe that Faith, Repentance, and sincere Obedience are the legal *but evangelical* Condition of the Covenant of Grace: Which that our meaning may be understood by all, we explain thus, we do not believe that our Faith, Repentance and sincere Obedience which are the Conditions of Justification and Glorification according to the tenour of the Covenant of Grace, have the same Place and Office in this new Covenant and Law of Grace, which most perfect sinless Obedience had and was to have had in the first old Covenant and Law of Works; for in that first old Covenant, personal, perfect sinless Obedience was to have been Mans Righteousness.

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by which alone he was to have been secured from Death; and so have had still a Title and Right to Life; but in the new Covenant and Law of Grace, neither our Faith, Repentance, nor sincere Obedience are or can be *that Righteousness* which secures us from Eternal Death and purchases for us a Right and Title to Eternal Life; when God first made the new Covenant with us in Christ, we had all lost our Right and Title to life, and were become guilty of Death; in which state we could never by any Act or Acts of ours, by any Righteousness in us or done by us, secure our selves from Death, and recover our Right and Title to Life: It was the satisfactory meritorious Righteousness of our Lord Redeemer, Christ Jesus, that could do, and did do this for us.

It was Christ's Righteousness alone that satisfied for our Sins, and redeemed us from Death; and that merited and purchased for us a Right and Title to Life. Christ's Righteousness alone procures us the pardon of our sins and a Right and Title to Life, so that it is Christ's satisfactory meritorious Righteousness alone that comes in the place of that perfect sinless Righteousness which was the Condition of the first Covenant and Law of works. It is Christ's Righteousness that stands us in stead of that perfect sinless Righteousness which we should have had, but have not. It is Christ's righteousness alone that procures to us the Restoration of all the good we had lost, and more and better. Our Faith, Repentance, and sincere Obedience have nothing to do as all in this matter. This was Christ's work alone, and we give him all the Glory of it with all our Hearts and Souls. And as it was Christ's Righteousness alone that merited our pardon of sin, and deliverance from Death; and that purchased our acceptance with God, as righteous in his sight, and our Right and Title to Life; so it is by his Promise and Law of Grace that the Lord gives us that which he had merited and purchased for us, that he gives us the pardon of our sins and Right or Title to Life upon our repenting and believing; so that our repenting of our sins and believing in Christ, are but the immediate nearest means which God hath ordained to be used on our part that we may be fit to receive, and accordingly may receive those blessings and benefits which Christ hath purchased, and which by the promise are given unto us. The use of this means, the performance of those Duties of Faith and Repentance, is that which our Orthodox Divines call the Condition of the Covenant of Grace. For upon Condition that through Grace we do those Duties we shall have those blessings and benefits: The Lord will graciously give us them according to his promise, on condition that we by Grace do such and such Duties according to his Command. Our Faith and Repentance are not our Legal Righteousness, nor instead of it, (that is the Place and Office of Christ's Righteousness only) but they are the Condition which the Lord in the Gospel hath required of us, that according to his promise we may be blessed with the pardon of sin, be accepted as Righteous in his sight, and have a Right and Title to Eternal Life. From the premises it is manifest, that according to our Principles Faith and Repentance are not a Legal but an Evangelical Condition of the Covenant of Grace; and that they do not in the least detract from the Grace of it. And we desire it may be remembered, that though speaking of Faith and Repentance jointly, we call them sometimes the Condition of the Covenant, or the Condition of Justification, yet we make a difference between them; and because Repentance includes an hearty sorrow for sin, and purpose to forsake it and to return unto the Lord, we call it the disposing Condition; but finding by Holy Scripture and the Nature of the thing that Faith above other Graces hath a peculiar respect unto Christ and his Righteousness, we call it the receiving Condition, so doth our Reverend Brother Mr. Williams call it in *Gospel Truth stated*, &c. page 114; and we approve the distinction. He was not the first inventor of it; for it was used by others before either he or we were born. Now if this be true as the Lord who searcheth all hearts knows it to be, then let the World judge how false and injurious that Author is unto us, when in page 6. he giveth the People an account of our Principles as to this matter, in these following words, *They will not allow the personal Righteousness of Christ to be imputed to us any otherwise than in the merit of it,*

These notions  
were unknown  
to the first  
Christians.

Acts X. 35.

Justin Mart.

Apol. II.

p. 83. and

Ensebius ec. hist.

p. 15. 16. 269.

Opine!

in purchasing for us a far more easie Law of Grace, in the observation whereof, they place all our justifying Righteousness: Understanding hereby our own personal inbred holiness, and nothing else. They hold that Christ dyed to merit this of the Father, viz. that we might be justified upon easier terms under the Gospel, than those of the Law of Innocency; in stead of Justification by perfect Obedience, we are now to be justified by our own Evangelical Righteousness, made up of Faith, Repentance, and sincere Obedience.]

And Page 28. Many manage the Ministry, as if they had taken up a constant determination, even to know any thing, save Jesus Christ and him crucified. We are amazed to see so many ashamed of the Cross of Christ, and to behave, as if they accounted the sayings of Salvation, by the slain Son of God, an old antiquated Story, and unfit to be daily preached. And what comes in the room thereof, is not unknown, nor is it worth the mentioning: For all things that come in Christ's room, and juggle him out, either of Hearts or Pulpits, are alike abominable to a Christian.]

Again, in Page 33. by an Immoderate, he gives the People to understand, that we teach, that sincere obedience unto the Law is the Righteousness we must be found, and stand in, in our pleading for Justification, and that in so doing, we neither understand what we say, nor whereof we affirm, 1 Tim. 2. 7.]

Lastly, In his Appendix, Page 39. by another of his Immoderates, he gives the People to understand, that [we bring our own pitiful holiness into Justification, and thereby make it sit on the Throne of Judgment with the Precious Blood of the Lamb of God.]

By these Passages, that we have transcribed, word for word, out of his Letter, it appears, that he hath told the People a very tragical Story of some Ministers; and if he mean it of us, we know our selves to be so clear of those horrid Crimes, he charges us with; that we can declare with a good Conscience in the sight of God, who will judge us all, that it is as false with respect to us, as any Story that ever came out of the Mouth of the Father of Lies. For it hath been our chief desire, and endeavour, to preach Christ to the People, to preach Christ both as humbled and exalted, as crucified and glorified. To convince them of their need of Christ, of their being utterly undone without him; that there is no help nor hope for them from any thing in themselves, and of themselves, or from any meer Creature, either in Heaven or Earth; that Christ is the way, the truth and the life, and that there is no coming to the Father, but by him; that there is no Salvation in any other but in Jesus Christ, because there is no other Name under Heaven given unto Men whereby we must be saved: That there needs no other, because Christ being not onely Man but God also, being God-man, he is an all-sufficient Saviour, able and willing to save, able to save to the uttermost, to save perfectly, to save evermore all that come unto God by him. It hath been our care and endeavour to teach the People, that Christ hath not onely procured for us the new Covenant, or Law of Grace, according to which we may be justified, and saved, if we comply with the Terms, and Conditions of it, but that he hath by his Humiliation and Obedience, his Obedience unto Death, even the Death of the Cross, fully satisfied the justice of God for our Sins, merited for us the pardon of them, with the acceptance of us as righteous in the sight of God, and a Right, or Title to Eternal Life, if we sincerely Believe and Repent; And moreover that he hath merited for us by his Blood, and gives unto us by his Spirit all that Grace whereby we do both sincerely believe, and repent, and obey the Gospel.

We tell the People, that God made with us the new Covenant, or Law of Grace, in and through Christ the Mediator, and Surety of it, That it is founded upon, and ratified, and confirmed to us by his Blood-shedding and Death; and that he hath purchased for us all the Grace, Blessings and Benefits of it. We tell them, and prove to them, that Christ hath fulfilled all Righteousness; that he most perfectly kept every Law of God that he was under the obligation of; that he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death; even the death of the Cross: That it was for us, Men, and for our Salvation, that he came down from Heaven, and was humbled, and became obedient unto death: That his Obedience, active and passive, was equivalent,

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fully equivalent to all that we ought to do, and to all that we deserve to suffer for not doing what we ought, for not doing what is commanded us, and for doing what is forbidden us: That by his Obedience, and Sufferings, he hath paid the full price of our Redemption, and by paying that Price hath made full satisfaction to the Justice of God for our Sins, and hath merited for us the full pardon of our Sins, and Eternal Salvation of our Souls, if we sincerely believe, repent, and obey the Gospel, by that Grace which he hath also purchased for us by his Blood, promised to us in his Word, and gives unto us by his Spirit. So that we are compleat in him, we have all in, and from him, who is the Head, the living, and Life-giving Head, the ever blessed, and glorious Head of the whole Church, in whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and in whom it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell, that out of his fulness we might receive, and grace for grace. Moreover we call People, we command them, we exhort and beseech them, in God's Name, to believe in Christ the Son of God, and Saviour of Men, to repent of their Sins, and to be subject and obedient unto him: The more effectually to encourage and persuade them so to do, we assure them in God's Name, that if they do Indeed, through Grace, believe, repent, and obey, they shall be first justified, and afterwards glorified, and that *not for their Faith, Repentance, and sincere Obedience, but only for the satisfactory meritorious Righteousness of Christ imputed to them.* So that we teach People to plead Christs Righteousness onely as that which satisfies God's Justice for them, and as that which procures, and purchases to them the pardon of their Sins, the acceptance of their Persons as righteous in God's sight, with their Right and Title, first to eternal life, and at last the actual donation of eternal life for their everlasting portion and inheritance. On the other hand, we faithfully declare to them, that they ought, by no means to ascribe unto their Faith, Repentance, or Obedience, *any of these things that belong to Christs satisfactory, meritorious Righteousness:* That the place and office of Faith, in preference to justification, is to be the consenting, receiving, trusting Condition of it, or the Instrumental means of receiving Christ as offered in the Gospel, and with him his Righteousness, *for which alone we are justified:* That the place and office of Repentance is to be the disposing condition of justification, or rather (if you will) of the Person to be justified, it not being consistent with the Truth of God's Word, nor with the Perfection of his Nature, to pardon a Sinner whilst he continues his full obstinate Resolution to go on in his Enmity and Rebellion against the Divine Majesty: And lastly, that the place and office of sincere obedience (in the notion under which we now consider it) is to be a condition of obtaining Eternal Life and Glory; we do not say that it is the cause, (though Calvin, Twiss, Ames, Rutherford, &c. have not spared to say, and write, that it is, in some sense, a cause, an inferiour disposing cause, &c.) but a duty and condition until the performing whereof, God hath suspended the Gift of Eternal Life and Glory; and to the Performers of which duty and condition he hath freely promised, and according to his promise he graciously giveth Eternal Life and Glory, for the sake of Christs meritorious Righteousness only. And we desire it may be always remembered that *from this condition of sincere obedience,* we do by no means exclude, but include the continued exercise of Faith in Christ, as that which is the spring of it, and which runs through all the parts of it; as also we hold that it comprehends the continued practice of Repentance, and Love to God and Man. Such sincere Obedience we hold to be a condition to be performed on our Exek. 18. 24. part, for the obtaining of Eternal Life and Glory. For we learn 25. Heb. 10. 38. from the Scriptures of Truth, that if any of God's People should apostatize from Faith in Christ, fall from the Profession and Practice of Christs true Religion, and give themselves up to the wilful commission of all manner of Abominations, and dye in that state without Repentance, they would lose their Right to Eternal Life, be shut out of Heaven, and cast down to Hell, there to suffer the Vengeance of Eternal Fire: Whereas on the contrary, all that continue to the end in the exercise of Faith in Christ, and in the practice of Repentance and

Evangelical

Evangelical Obedience, they have their Right to Life and Glory still continued to them, and shall, through God's Grace and Mercy, and Christ's Righteousness and Merits be put into the full and eternal possession of it.

If our Authour should object, and say, that we suppose an impossibility, from whence there is no right arguing for, or against any thing. We desire him to consider what Dr. Twiss says in the 29 Page of his Answer to the Book called *The Synod of Dort and Arles reduced to practice*: His Words are, [When we say, the elect Saints cannot fall from Grace, this is spoken not in respect of any absolute impossibility, but merely upon supposition of God's upholding them: And accordingly they are said to be kept by the power of God, through Faith unto Salvation, 1 Pet. 1. 5.] Now this impossibility of falling away from Grace, in Scholastical account, is but an Impossibility Secundum quid; like as we say, It is impossible that Antichrist should fall, or the Jews be called till the time, which God hath appointed, it comes, for bringing forth these great and wonderful Works of his; but the contrary is simply possible on either part.] Thus Twiss. Our Answer then is, that the Apostacy of a Saint is not simply and absolutely impossible: Alas! it is but too possible with respect to us, considered in our selves; but it is only impossible in some respects, to wit, in respect of God's Purpose and Promise, and Christ's Intercession, &c. And notwithstanding its being impossible, in this sense, yet we find it supposed, and granted also, to be possible in another sense. And further we find, that the Spirit of God, in Holy Scripture, supposes greater Impossibilities than that seems to be, and rationally argues from them too: Witness John 8. 55. Gal. 1. 8.

If any should further object, and say, that hereby we destroy the Saints Assurance of Eternal Life and Glory, by holding that their obtaining of it, is suspended on a condition. We Answer, the consequence is false, because those who are assured, upon good Grounds, that they are truly Converted, and justified by Faith in Christ's Blood, may from Holy Scripture be assured of the See 1 Job. 2. 19. condition of perseverance through Grace, in Faith, Repentance, and whatever God hath made necessary to their obtaining Eternal Life and Glory. Indeed if our Glorification depended upon a Condition of which we could not be sure, then neither could we be sure of Glorification it self. But we believe, and maintain, that through Grace we may, and ought to be sure of the Condition, to wit, of Perseverance, and consequently that we may, and ought to be sure of our future Glorification, which is infallibly promised to perseverance in Faith and Holiness. We know the Followers of Luther, whom our Authour so much magnifies, as if he were for him, and his Party, deny that a Saint can be absolutely sure ordinarily in this World, that he shall be saved in the World to come. It is true, they maintain that a Saint may, and ought to be absolutely sure, that he is in a state of Grace and Salvation for the present, but they deny, and on their Principles must deny, that he can have an absolute, but only a conditional assurance of his Eternal Salvation and Glorification, because they say, he cannot be absolutely sure, that he shall not fall totally, and finally from the state of Grace that he is now in. If we should follow Luther, or the Lutherans, in this, what a Clamour would our Authour raise against us, how would he proclaim us to the World to be Arminians or Papists, yet Luther was a blessed Man, and most Orthodox Divine, because in his Commentary on the Galatians, he seems to hold with our Authour in some things, though in other things, of greater importance, he be against him, and us too.

But Holy Scripture is the Rule, and Measure of our Faith, in these, and all other Religious Matters, and according to the Prescript thereof, we believe, profess, and preach to the People, that as Christ purchased all Grace for us by his Blood, so he gives it unto us by his Spirit in the use of his appointed Means, and what Saving Grace he once gives unto his People, he never wholly takes away from them again, and that if at any time they fall into Sin, against Knowledge and Conscience; he raises them up again, by causing them to renew their Faith and Repentance, and never wholly leaves them, nor forsakes them, but gives them still more Grace, according to



their need, and by Grace prepare them for, and at last brings them unto Glory. Thus we desire, and endeavour to Preach Christ, and now we appeal to all, who have any Conscience of Truth and Honesty, whether we neglect to Preach Christ, or whether in the preaching of Christ we set up any thing in co-ordination with him, yea whether we be not so far from it, that on the contrary we make all subordinate to him, and derive all Grace from him, not only the Grace of Justification, and Glorification, which are promised on Condition of Faith, Repentance, and sincere Obedience, but also the Grace of effectual Vocation, Faith and Repentance, in a Word, all the Grace whereby we perform the whole condition of the Covenant from first to last. From the premises it may manifestly appear to any, that are not stark blind, that we do not hold Faith, Repentance, and sincere Obedience, to be a Legal, but an Evangelical Condition of the Covenant of Grace, and consequently, that in our Judgement, they do not hold the same Place and Office in the New Covenant of Grace, which personal, perfect, sinless Obedience had, and were to have had in the first Covenant of Innocency, and of Works.

*Object.* But saith our Author, in his Appendix, Pag. 29. *It is the Achillean Argument of the New Divinity, that Faith, Repentance, and sincere Obedience is our Evangelical Righteousness, and that Righteousness is our defence against the charge of Unbelief, Impenitence, &c.* And what then? Why in the following Pages he so shapes it as might best serve his Design, which was to make the People believe, that we set up our own Righteousness in the place of Christ's; and maintain, that Men must be justified by their own Righteousness, and not only by Christ's. And so he trips up *Achilles*: Heels by the Fallacy of many Interrogations. But it will be no very difficult Task to scatter this Mist, which he hath cast before the Peoples Eyes. In order thereto, let it be considered,

1. That the Substance of this Argument was not invented by any amongst us, dead or alive, that we know of; but some in this Nation having read it in some very eminently learned foreign Divines, particularly *Ludovicus de Dieu* at large, and the Holy, Humble, Learned, and most Acute *Placeus*, they received it, and improved it as useful to clear some seeming Difficulties in Scripture, objected to us by our Adversaries the Papists.

2. Consider, that this way of reconciling *James* with *Paul* in the matter of Justification, for the Substance of it was taken up also by the Learned *Thurinus*.

3. That it doth not appear, that all of us ever expressed ourselves in those Words for the clearing up of the seeming difference between *James* and *Paul*.

4. That those who do take that way, do not impose it upon others. We know there have been many ways taken by Reformed Divines to expound *James*, so as not to contradict *Paul*: And some considerable difference there may seem to be among Divines in the methodizing, and expressing of their Notions of those Matters: But yet there appears to be very little difference amongst them, as to the things themselves. Indeed upon the Matter all seems to come almost to the same thing. And particularly, let it be considered,

5. That this way of Interpreting *James* his Justification by Works, and reconciling it with *Paul*'s Justification by Faith, seems to differ from the more common, modern Opinion, mostly in the manner of expression, which some of us think most agreeable to the Scripture Phrase. But we leave every Man to express his Notions, as best pleaseth him, provided, that if he do not use Scripture Words, yet he do not contradict Scripture sense. And therefore,

6. We desire it may be considered, that this way of expounding *James*, which we are now speaking of, doth not in the least contradict the Holy Scripture, but rather serves to explain it if it be understood (as it ought to be) in the true genuine sense of its Authors. For,

(1.) Though they say, that our Faith, Repentance, and sincere Obedience is an Evangelical

*Evangelical Righteousness*, (as indeed it is) yet at the same time they declare that this *Evangelical Righteousness* is no other thing but the *Condition of the new Covenant* on our part, whereby we are interested first, and still keep our interest in the *Satisfaction*, meritorious *Righteousness of Christ*, by and for which alone we are justified from first to last. They do not say that this *Evangelical Righteousness*, which is the *Condition of the Covenant*, doth satisfy God's Justice for the least sin either against Law or Gospel; or that it doth properly merit to us the least good, so much as a Cup of Gold Water. They give unto Christ alone the whole Glory of having by his *Righteousness* satisfied Justice for all our Sins, and merited to us all our Mercies. So that our Author was (we think) a little impertinent in putting his question, page 41. *What is that Righteousness which justifies a man from the sin of Unbelief?* For he knows well enough that the *Worthy Divines* (as he deservedly calls them) with whom he has to do in that Argument, have published it to all the World under their hands, That also as a Man who was before an *Unbeliever* begins through Grace sincerely to believe in Christ, and to repent of his *Unbelief*, and of all his other sins, immediately thereupon, Christ's satisfactory meritorious *Righteousness* justifies him from his sin of *Unbelief*, and from all his other former sins, both *Original* and *Actual*; that is, God by and for Christ's *Righteousness* justifies him from them upon his believing and repenting. And as our Author knows this to be true, so he hath honestly confessed it in the end of the same Paragraph, *Will any man* (says he) *dare to tell a person who is troubled in Conscience about his sin of Unbelief, that Christ's Righteousness is his legal Righteousness against the charge of sins against the Law; but for Gospel-charges he must answer them in his own name?* I know our hottest opposers would upon such an answer, and would freely tell such a Man, that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin, and that his justification from his *Unbelief*, must be only in that *Righteousness* which he so sinfully had rejected while in *Unbelief*, and now lays hold on by Faith. Here the Truth comes out at last, and in effect he gives the lie to his own false accusations of the Lord's Ministers, and acquits the accused: For if his hottest Opposers freely tell People that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin, and that their justification from the sin of *Unbelief* must be only by the *Righteousness of Christ*, then how can those things be true whereof (as was observed before) he had accused us in page 6, 28, 33, and page 39. That we bring our own pitiful Holiness into justification, and make it sit on the Throne of Judgment, with the precious blood of the Lamb of God? *Ex ore tuo, &c.* But,

(2.) The Authors of the Argument we are upon, never said, wrote, or so much as thought (that can be known) That our sincere Faith and Repentance is a Defence or Justification against a charge of Unbelief or Impenitence given in against us by God, for they knew full well without being taught it by this Author, That the God of Truth cannot be the Author of a Lie, which he would certainly and evidently be, if he should charge us with being Unbelievers and Impenitent at that very time when he knows that by his own Spirit and Grace we sincerely believe and repent; But that which the aforesaid Excellent Divines said, is yet to be seen in their Writings, and it is this, That our sincere Faith and Repentance is a Defence and Justification against any false charge of Unbelief and Impenitence that is or possibly may be given in against us by the Devil and the World, or by our own mistaken Conscience. And who dare deny the Truth of this? May not the Devil and the World falsely accuse, do not they too often falsely accuse us, and say that we are Hypocrites, and have neither true Faith nor Repentance? When this Brother accuseth us so falsely as he doth in his Letter, we need not think it strange that the Devil and the World do falsely accuse us: Yea we have that within our own breasts that may sometimes through the temptations of Satan, or the remainders of sinful Darkness and Unbelief, falsely accuse us of predominant Hypocrisy, Unbelief, and Impenitency. Now if at the same time we are really true Converts, and through Grace sincerely believe and repent, what Man that is endued with common Sense and reason can reasonably deny that our sincere Faith

and Repentance is a sufficient Defence and Justification of us, against all such false accusations. Sure we are that our infinitely Gracious God and Saviour allows our plea, and (we most heartily bless his Name for it) hath sometimes by his Spirit and Grace sensibly helped us to make our defence by clearing up to us the sincerity of our Faith and Repentance, and by enabling us to take unto our selves the Comfort, and to give him all the Glory of our being sincere penitent Believers, notwithstanding all that the Devil, World, or Flesh, say falsely to the contrary.

But as for those who are impenitent Unbelievers indeed, all the World knows that the Faith and Repentance which they have not, can never justify them: from the Unbelief and Impenitency which they really have deeply rooted in their hearts. In short, We maintain that *Christ's meritorious and satisfactory Righteousness* only justifies us at *God's Bar* from all our sins against any Law of God whatsoever, as soon as we through Grace performe the Gospel-Condition of sincere Faith and Repentance: And then that sincere Faith and Repentance is our Defence and Justification before our most Gracious God, and before all honest Men against all false accusations of our not having performed the Gospel-Condition of sincere Faith and Repentance. But as for those who continue still in Unbelief and Impenitency, they have nothing to defend and justify them; but if they live and dye in that state, their Unbelief and Impenitency will bind upon them to Eternity the Curse and Condemnation of the Law, and moreover will bring upon them the sorer Vengeance of the despised Gospel, *John* 3. 18, 19, 20. and *Heb.* 2. 2, 3. and 12. 24.

Thus *Achilles* is on his Legs again without receiving the least hurt from the weak efforts of that assailant; who hath nothing to say to him without misrepresenting him, but that he doth not like his Language, pretending that it is unscriptural, dangerous, and tends to the dishonouring of Christ's Righteousness, &c. but that pretence is utterly false: For,

(1.) That our sincere Faith, Repentance, and Gospel-Obedience is a righteousness, is evident from the Nature of the thing, For (1.) They are Duties which we owe unto the Lord our God, and it is self-evident that it is a righteous thing to give unto God the things that are Gods.

(2.) It is confessed by our Divines in their Disputes against the Papists, that our Faith, Repentance, sincere Obedience and Holyness is a Righteousness: For they generally grant that we have a two-fold Righteousness.

(1.) The Righteousness of Christ imputed to us.

(2.) A Righteousness inherent in us, and adherent to us, which we receive from Christ by his Spirit and Grace.

This is expressly confessed by that same Bishop *Downham* in his Book of Justification, which our Author, page 12. of his Letter, recommends as an Orthodox Book. There that Reverend and Learned Divine affirms that we are Righteous both by the Righteousness of Christ imputed to us, which is our Principal Righteousness; and likewise by another Righteousness wrought in us and performed by us, which is our secondary subordinate Righteousness. If our Authour should have the Confidence to deny this, it will be proved against him by Authority both Divine and Humane.

(2.) This our subordinate Righteousness is rightly termed *Evangelical*, because it is required by the Word of the Gospel, wrought by the Spirit of the Gospel, and is a complying with the terms, and a performing of the Condition of the Gospel.

(3.) That our sincere Faith, Repentance, and Obedience, is a subordinate Righteousness by which we are defended and justified against the false charge of Hypocrisy, Unbelief, and Impenitency, is so far from being unscriptural, that it agrees exactly with the very Letter, Scope and Sense of the Scripture in the second Chapter of *James*, if that Epistle be Scripture, as I hope we all believe that it is; for there a Man is expressly in formal terms said to be justified by works, *James* 2. 21, 24, 25. which words can signify no less than this, That the good Works and sincere Obedience of a good Man do justify him against the false accusation of being an Hypocrite

erite or prophane Libertine. As to what our Authour says in page 41. That works of Righteousness are only a Justification of Faith, and not of the Person of the Believer, it is a notorious falsehood, and exprelly contradicts the Spirit of God, who saith that a man is justified by works, and particularly that Abraham and Rahab were justified by works, and not that their Faith only was justified by Works. We do not deny but that good Works do justify Faith, but we also affirm with James, that they do likewise justify the person of the Believer. But how is that? Why they justify this Person in tantum, in so far as they are his Defence and Justification against the false charge of his being a Hypocrite or Libertine, and not a true penitent obedient Believer. In all this neither doth James, nor we after him dishonour the Righteousness of Christ in the least; for our inherent and adherent Righteousness is intirely subordinate to Christ's imputed Righteousness, it hath also quite another Use and Office than Christ's imputed Righteousness, and it proceeds from it as the only meritorious cause thereof; We abhor all Opinions and Practices that have the least real tendency to dishonour Christ or his Righteousness. We ascribe this to Christ as his peculiar incommunicable Glory that (as was said before) his righteousness alone comes in the place of that personal perfect sinless Righteousness which was the Condition of the first Covenant of Innocency and Law of Works. And as for that personal, imperfect, yet sincere Righteousness, which through the Grace of Christ we attain unto, by Believing, Repenting, and Obeying the Gospel, it is nothing but the Condition of the new Covenant, by performing whereof we get and keep an Interest in Christ's imputed Righteousness by and for which alone we are justified from all our sins of what kind soever, and have a right unto, and at last get possession of Eternal Life and Glory in God's Heavenly Kingdom. We have insisted long upon this, that all may see how sound and orthodox our Principles are in the point of Justification; and how we have been abused and misrepresented to the People by the Authour of the Letter. Whether he did it ignorantly or maliciously he knows best himself: But which way soever he did it, it was certainly very ill done.

5thly, and lastly, We believe that as the Faith of God's Elect is a Condition of the Covenant of Grace, so that it is not an uncertain but a most certain Condition; our meaning is, that before the Elect believe, it is not uncertain whether ever they will believe or not; It is indeed uncertain to the Persons themselves; but it is not objectively uncertain, the thing is not uncertain in it self, nor is it uncertain unto God whether ever his Elect shall believe. No, it is most certain in it self and unto God that all the Elect shall believe; for God hath chosen them through Christ unto Faith; Christ hath merited special Grace for them whereby they shall believe, God through Christ hath promised that special Grace, and God by his Spirit for Christ's sake gives them that special Grace, whereby they do all certainly and infallibly believe. The contrary Opinion to this, is by our Divines generally charged upon the Arminians. It is said that the Arminians hold that it is so far left to Mens Wills assisted by Universal sufficient Grace, whether they will make that Grace effectual, and so whether they will believe or not, that it may come to pass that not one Man in the whole World shall ever eventually believe, and consequently that Christ's Blood might have been shed in vain, and not one Soul have been effectually redeemed and saved by it. This Opinion whoever they be that hold it, we utterly detest and abhor; and declare to the World, that as we are infallibly sure that many of the Elect have believed already, and do at present believe, so all and every one of them in their several times shall by the special and effectual Grace of God believe to the saving of their Souls. We also believe that this certainty of the Faith of God's Elect, doth not at all hinder their Faith from being a condition, but rather that it makes it to be a certain Condition. The Arminians pretend they cannot understand how Faith can be a Duty required of us, and a condition to be freely performed by us, and that yet at the same time we are so excited to it, and assisted by the Grace of God in the doing of it, that it is done with an infallible certainty. And therefore they say that if we did believe

have by such a special effectual Grace as that we could not but believe at the time we are influenced by that Grace, than our believing would neither be a Duty nor Condition of the Gospel.

Thus the *Arminians* argue against Special Effectual Grace. But what say our *Antihomians* to this Argument? Why truly they say it is a very good argument, that the *Arminians* have reason on their side, and that they do effectually prove that Faith cannot be a Condition of the Gospel-Covenant. Now we desire the World to take notice that the *Antihomians* join with the *Arminians* against us, and take up their very Argument to prove that Faith neither is nor can be a Condition of the Gospel-Covenant. And since they account this their chief argument, we desire they would be so just and honest as to take the whole argument and not only a part of it; and consider that the whole argument proves that upon supposition of special effectual Grace, Faith can neither be a Duty nor a Condition; and it proves as strongly that Faith cannot be a Duty of the Gospel, as that it cannot be a Condition of the Gospel. Either then our *Antihomians* must say that Faith is no Duty because of this argument; or if it may be still a Duty, so may it also be still a Condition, notwithstanding the force of this Argument. For ought we know, the right *Antihomians* may be willing enough to grant the consequence of the argument to be good as to both parts of it; for we are afraid they care as little for Duties as they do for Conditions; and some of them have plainly renounced Faiths being their Duty; and have put it over upon Christ as his Duty and not theirs. But we hope that Author of the Letter is not yet so far gone, and that he will retain some respect for *Rutherford's* *Examen Arminianismi*, which he hath a hand in publishing, and where he will find these words following, page 270. *Quæstio an fides in potest esse conditio, &c. Tunc Quæstio: whether Faith cannot be a Condition required of the Elect by way of Duty and free Obedience, and at the same time be a thing promised by God, and unrevocably wrought by God in us. The Remonstrants deny it, we affirm it: We likewise are for the affirmative against the Remonstrants who hold the negative of the Question. But how to reconcile the Efficacy of God's Grace with our Free Will in doing the Duties incumbent upon us, is no easy matter.* See *Augustin lib. de gratia. Sæpi. cap. 24.* says that it is, *Difficilis et solvendum quæstio: A Question difficult to be resolved.* And *Epist. 46. ad Valentinum*; he says it is difficult. *Quæstio et paucis intelligibilis, id est difficult question, and such as few can understand.* And again, *lib. de gratia Christi contra Pelagium et Celestinum, cap. 47. Ista quæstio, ubi de arbitrio voluntatis et Dei gratia disputatur, ita est ad discernendum difficilis, ut quando, &c.* That Question where Men dispute about Free Will, and God's Grace, is so hard to discern or understand, that when Men defend Free Will, they seem to deny God's Grace, and when they assert God's Grace, they seem to take away, or destroy Free Will.

What must we do then in this case, must we deny Free-will altogether? No, not altogether; for as *Augustin* saith, *Epist. 47. ad Valentinum, Fides Catholicæ neque liberum arbitrium negat, sive in vitam malam, sive in bonam; neque tantum ei tribuit, ut sine gratia Dei valeat aliquid, &c.* The Catholick Faith neither denies Free-will, whether in order to a bad life, or a good; neither doth it ascribe so much to Free-will, as that without God's Grace it can do any good, &c.

We must not then altogether deny Free-will, the Catholick Faith will not allow us to do so; nor will the inward sense and experience that we have of our own Soul, and its Actions suffer us to do it. For as *Augustin* saith, *Lib. 82. Quæst. 98. Moveri per se Animam sentit, qui sentit in se esse Voluntatem: We feels his Soul to be moved by it self, who feels that he hath a Will in himself.* And if we must not altogether deny all Free-will against Faith and Experience, much less must we deny the Grace of God. For as *Augustin* saith in the forecited 46 *Epist. ad Valent. Si non est Gratia Dei, quomodo Deus salvat Mundum? Et si non est liberum arbitrium, quomodo judicat Mundum: If there be no*

Grace



*Grace of God, how does God save the World? And if there be no Free-will, how does God judge the World? The occasion of Augustin's writing this is observable. Two Young Men, Crescinius and Felix, came to Augustin from another Congregation, and told him that there was a Controversie amongst them, in the managing whereof some had so preached the Grace of God, as to deny that Man hath any Free-will, and which is worse, they said that in the Day of Judgment God will not render unto every one according to their Works. This was the occasion of Augustin's writing both that 46. and the following 47. Epistle to Valentinus. And towards the end of the 46. Epistle, he gave this prudent, and wholesome Advice, *Ubi sentitis vos non intelligere, &c.* that is, Where you perceive that you do not understand, (how Grace and Free-will consist,) in the mean time believe the Divine Oracles, for there both is a Free-will in Man, and also the Grace of God, without whose help, Free-will can neither be converted unto God, nor yet grow up in God. And what you piously believe, pray that you may also wisely understand. This was the Advice which St. Augustin gave unto the Disputers of his time. And it was very good Advice, for certainly where two things are both clearly revealed in Scripture, and yet we find it very difficult to understand, and explain the way and manner how they do consist, and agree with one another, we ought firmly to believe them both upon the Authority, and Veracity of God revealing, though the mode and manner of their consistence in the same subject, we do not understand. Yet what we do believe, we may, and ought, humbly and reverently to pray, that if it be God's will, we may also more thoroughly understand. So in the present case before us, we ought firmly to believe, that God's Elect, when they are effectually called, and converted, have Free-will actually to believe in Jesus Christ, and also that it is by the special, effectual Grace of God that they do actually believe; though we do not thoroughly understand how these two hang together, how Man's Free-will, and God's Effectual Grace consist and agree with respect to the Act of Believing. For both are clearly revealed in Scripture, as it were easier to demonstrate. See Job. 8. 36. But the mode and manner of their consistence and agreement is not clearly revealed, and therefore not so necessary to be explicitly believed. Yet may we humbly pray, and endeavour (if the Lord will) so far to understand their consistence and concord, as to be able, in some measure, to answer the Objections of those who deny either one or other of them, upon pretence that they cannot both be matter of Faith, because they contradict and destroy each other, and so if one be true, the other must be false.*

Now we humbly conceive, that the great difficulty about the concord of the freedom of Man's will, and of the efficacy of God's Grace in the act of believing, arises from the false notion of Free-will, which the Remonstrants have learned from the Schoolmen, and from some of the Greek Fathers, to wit, that the formal Nature and Essence of the liberty of the Will of Man, consists in an absolute indifference to all things, in that, or not to all at all, as a Man pleaseth, and that even when all things are put together which are pre-requisite to his acting.

We must ingenuously confess, that we do not see how it is possible to reconcile this notion of Free-will with the powerful efficacy of Special Grace. But we take this to be a false notion of Liberty, and that therefore we are no ways concerned to trouble our selves about the reconciling of such a false notion of Liberty with the efficacy of God's Graces; but rather we are concerned to find out the true Notion of Liberty of Will, add to the consistency with the efficacy of Grace. And we take this to be the formal Nature of the Liberty of Man's Will, That it is a power with which God hath endued the Soul of Man, whereby he is enabled to consider of, and weigh the several things proposed to him; and upon the Reasons and Motives that do, or may appear to him from the consideration of things, willingly to choose, or not choose, or refuse one thing, and to choose, or embrace another. Now this notion of Free-will is well enough consistent with the efficacy of Grace. For the effectual Grace of God is so far from hindering a Man from using this sort of Liberty, that on the contrary it mightily helps him to use it aright; for,

1. The Grace of God's Spirit enlightens Man's Mind, and enables him to understand the things proposed by the Word unto his choice, and to see the great reason he hath to choose them.

2. Grace enclines the Will of Man to follow the conduct of his enlightened understanding, and willingly to choose the best Things upon the best Reasons and Motives. Thus God deals with Man as a Rational Creature, capable of Moral Government by Laws and Exhortations, Promises and Threatnings; God offers no Violence to his Faculties, but influences him in a way suitable to his reasonable Nature, and helps him to bring his judging, and choosing Powers into Act, so as not at all to hinder but rather further and promote his true Liberty. According to that of our Saviour, (*John 8. 36.*) often used by Holy *Augustin* in this Controversie, *If the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.* And that of the Apostle, *2 Cor. 3. 17. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.* There is Liberty and Freedom, both from the doing of Evil and to the doing of Good. This was visible in our Blessed Lord himself, when he was here upon Earth, in his state of Humiliation. Undoubtedly he was a true Man, and had all the *Essentials* of Humane Nature, in the highest degree of possible Perfection; consequently he had Free-will, so far as it is an Essential Property, and Perfection of Humane Nature; but he had not, nay he could not possibly have any *indifferency* or undeterminedness of will to Good or Evil: His Mind did not hang in *equilibrio*, in an even Balance between Good and Evil, so as to have a Power to determine and incline himself to choose either. Therefore it is demonstratively evident, that the formal, essential Nature of Man's Free-will doth not, cannot consist in the fore-said indifferency to Good or Evil.

But on the other hand, The most Noble Soul of our blessed Lord was certainly endued with Power to consider, and judge of the several things proposed to him, and upon the best Reasons and Motives that appeared to him from the consideration of things, willingly to choose, or refuse them, and to act, or not to act, to act thus, or otherwise, as he saw cause. Whence we may confidently conclude, that the formal, essential Nature of Man's Free-will consists in this Power of acting willingly according to the Judgment of Right Reason; and not in the former undeterminedness, or indifferency of the Will to do, or not to do, to do Good or Evil, even when all things pre-requisite to its doing and acting do meet together, and concur to cause it to do and act. Upon this occasion we cannot but mention, with approbation, a Passage of a very Reverend, and Dignified Divine of the Church of England, in a Discourse of Christian Liberty, Chap. 11. Sect. 3. pag. 139, 140, 141. As for those that contend that it is more praise-worthy to do Good and forbear evil, having a power to do otherwise, than to be under a necessity of so doing; supposing they mean by necessity, such as is not from without, or from an inward blind instinct, but from an understanding Principle and Perfection of Nature, I must needs tell them there is no Proposition in the World more false or absurd. I will not therefore stick to say, that to have the Will necessarily determined to all Good, and from all evil, from an over-powering sense of the becomingness, and excellency of the one, and the vileness, and odiousness of the other, is the very perfection of Liberty. And this is so far from being impossible to be obtained by Creatures, or by ourselves, that by the help of God's Grace, it is in a large measure even in this life attainable. I mean such a sense of Good and Evil, as shall certainly determine us to Good, and against Evil in most of the Instances of each. There are some Immoralities and wicked Actions, that they who have attained to but very mean and ordinary Degrees of Goodness, cannot persuade themselves so much as to endeavour to reconcile their Minds to. Nay, there are some that no Man can easily be supposed able to consent to, but an extraordinarily depraved and wicked Wretch, let the Motives that are used to persuade him be what they will. Such as blaspheming of God, contriving the murder of our Parents, of a most obliging Friend: Torturing of innocent Babies, and the like horrid Villanies. Surely then, a Man is capable of such a vivid sense of the hatefulnes of Sin in general, as will (whilst it lasts) render it impossible for him to will deliberately to commit any known Sin whatsoever. It is confessed, that

that we cannot hope to get past all danger of sudden surprizals, so long as we inhabit these Bodies, and remain in our present unhappy Circumstances; but I say, so powerful a sense of the infinite unrighteousness, dissingenuity, unreasonableness, folly and madness of opposing the Holy Will of our Great Creator, and Blessed Redeemer, may by the Divine Assistance, be acquired, even on this side Heaven, as shall determine us effectually against all deliberate, and wilful Violations of the Divine Laws. For this we have the Authority of a great Apostle: St. John saith in his Epist. 3. 9. Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, neither can he sin, because he is born of God, &c.

This excellent Passage of Bishop Fowler's, may help to clear up the foresaid difficulty, and to shew us how the Act of believing, may be a Duty and Condition of the Gospel, and yet be produced by the effectual Grace of God assisting our Faculties in that production; for the efficacy of Grace doth not hinder, but rather further the free exercise of our liberty of Will in producing the Act of Faith. So that our believing in Christ being an Act of Free Obedience, (notwithstanding that the Regenerating Principle of Spiritual Life, and Seed of Faith, inclines and biases us to act, and the actual Influence of the Spirit causeth us to reduce the Principle into Act,) we can see no reason at all why the actual believing in Christ, may not be both our duty, and likewise the condition upon the free performance of which God promiseth to justify us, to pardon our sins, and give us a Right and Title to Eternal Life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Our Author confesseth that the *Covenant of Redemption was strictly conditional*, and that Christ's offering up the Humane Nature in sacrifice to God, was (in part at least) the *strict Condition* of it; and yet Christ performed that Condition as necessarily, and unavoidably as we perform the Condition of actual believing when we are influenced thereunto by the special, and effectual Grace of God. This we take to be a demonstration that the meer infallible certainty and necessity of the Elect's believing in Christ, cannot hinder their Faith from being a proper Evangelical Condition of the new Covenant. And having thus at large declared in what sense we hold the Covenant of Grace not to be conditional, and in what sense to be conditional; We shall next prove against our Author that it really is conditional, and that it is not without Ground that we believe it so to be.

In order herunto we premise these two Things.

I. That it is with respect to the subsequent Blessings and Benefits of the Covenant that we hold it to be Conditional, that is, it is with respect to *Justification* and *Glorification*. For as the Professors of Leyden say in their *Synopsis of purer Divinity*, Disp. 22. pag. 259. *Promissiones Evangelii sunt potissimum duæ.* (1.) *De justificatione coram Deo per fidem.* (2.) *De hereditate vitæ æternæ*, Rom. 1. 17. 1 Johan. 2. 25. *The Promises of the Gospel are principally two. The first is the Promise of Justification in the sight of God by Faith: And the second is, The Promise of inheriting Eternal Life.* It is these Promises, and the Covenant of Grace in respect of these Promises, which we hold to be Conditional.

II. That by a Condition, we understand a Duty which God requires of us, for obtaining the promised Benefit, so as to suspend his giving us the promised Benefit upon our performing the Duty required: Assuring us that if we perform the Duty required, we shall have the promised Benefit, but if we do not perform the Duty required, we shall not have the Benefit promised.

These two things premised, we come to prove that the Covenant of Grace is really Conditional, as aforesaid, with respect to its subsequent Blessings and Benefits. And this we shall do, (1.) by Scripture, (2.) by Reason consonant to Scripture, (3.) by Testimonies of Orthodox Divines, even of those very Divines whom our Author affirms to be against us. And,

1. We prove by Scripture that the Covenant of Grace is Conditional in the sense before explained. And we begin with Rom. 10. v. 9. where though the word Condition be not expressed, yet we have the thing meant by Condition, as really as if it

were expressed. For, saith the Apostle, *If thou shalt confess with thy Mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in thy Heart, that God hath raised him from the Dead, thou shalt be saved.* This Evangelical Promise and Proposition is as Conditional, as is that Legal one, *Rom. 10. 5. The man that doth those things, shall live by them.* But that Legal Promise and Proposition is Conditional, and confessed so to be, therefore is this conditional also. If it be said, that the Condition is not the same, nor doth it serve to the same end and purpose, we grant that: For we never said, nor thought, that the Conditions are the same, and for the same Ends and Purposes; for the one is a Legal Condition, the other is Evangelical, and so they differ specifically and in kind: But what then? Therefore they are not both Conditions. We deny the Consequence. For though they differ in the specific, yet they agree in the generic nature of Conditions: And Faith is as properly a Condition in genere conditionis Evangelicæ, as personal, perfect, sinless Obedience is a Condition in genere conditionis legalis, that is, Faith is as properly an Evangelical Condition, as perfect, sinless Obedience is properly a Legal Condition. We remember that the Pelagians of old objected against the Orthodox, that either our Faith is not wrought in us by the Special Grace of God, or else it cannot be a Duty, and so it cannot be a Condition. But we know also how St. Augustin answered their Objection, *Lib. de prædestin. Sanct. cap. 11.* Their Objection was this, *Cum dicitur, si credideris, salvus eris, &c.* When it is said, if thou believest, thou shalt be saved. The one of these, to wit Faith, is required of us by a Command, the other, to wit Salvation, is offered us by Promise, then that which is required is in Man's Power, as that which is promised is in God's Power. To this Pelagian Objection Augustin answers thus, *Eic dicitur, si credideris, salvus eris: Quemadmodum dicitur, si Spiritus, &c.* That is, So it is said, if thou believest, thou shalt be saved, as it is said, if you through the Spirit do mortifie the Deeds of the Body, you shall live, (*Rom. 8. 13.*) For here also the one of these two is required, and the other is promised. — as then although it be the Gift of God, to mortifie the Deeds of the Flesh, yet it is required of us, with an offer of the Reward of Life, for our encouragement thereunto: Just so Faith is also the Gift of God, although it be required of us, with an offer of the Reward of Salvation for our encouragement to believe, when it is said, if thou believest thou shalt be saved. For those things are therefore both commanded us, and also shewed to be the Gifts of God; that it may be known that both we do them, and also that God causeth us to do them. Thus Augustin. We find the like Objection, with the like Answer to it, in Bradwardin, *De Causa Dei, lib. 2. cap. 28. p. 557, 559.* The Objection, *Si Deus necessario requiratur ad agendum, &c.* If it be necessary that God concur to the proper production of every Act of the Creatures Will; since God's concurring or acting is not in the power of the Creature, then no Act of the Creature would be in its own power. The Answer is, *In rerum temporalium & spiritualium administratione videmus, &c.* In the administration both of temporal, and spiritual things, we see that there are more Powers and Dominions over the same thing, subordinate to one another as Inferior and Superior. — wherefore no Man ought to doubt, but that though the Will of the Creature have Power and Dominion over its own Act, yet thereby is not excluded a Superior Power and Lord, to wit, God himself, from a Superior Power, Dominion, and Efficiency in respect of the same Act. And a little after, he says out of Thomas Aquinas, *The Will is said to have Dominion over its own Act, not by excluding the first cause, but the first cause doth not so Act on the Will, as it determine it necessarily to one thing, or be determines Nature or natural Agents; and therefore the determination of the Act, is left in the power of the Understanding, and Will.* We mention both these Objections, with Answers to them, out of St. Augustin and Bradwardin, to shew, that though we cannot believe without, but do believe by the Grace of God; yet that no ways hinders our Faith from being a duty required of us, and also a Condition of the Covenant to be performed by us, and we know our Author cannot bring any appearance of an Argument against this, but that which was brought by the Pelagians in the time of St. Augustin, and which he answered. As for the place of Scripture we are arguing from, we have Calvin on our side acknowledging that it contains a Conditional Promise of the Gospel-Covenant,

3 Promise of Righteousness and Salvation to all that sincerely believe in Christ with their Hearts, and confess him with their Mouths. For thus he writes *Instit. Lib. 2. cap. 5, Sect. 12.* speaking of this very place of Scripture, to wit, *Rom. 10. 5, 8, 9.* id reputans *Paulus, &c. i. e. Paul considering this, that Salvation is offered in the Gospel, not upon that hard, difficult impossible condition which the Law requires of us (to wit, that they only shall obtain Salvation who have fully kept all the Commandments,) but upon a condition that is easie, ready, and soon attained unto, (to wit the Condition of Faith) he confirms it with this testimony: To wit the Testimony of Moses, which Paul quotes out of Deuteronomy, chap. 30. ver. 11, 12, 13, 14. and interprets it of the Doctrine of Faith in the Gospel. Let any read and compare Rom. 10. 6, 7, 8. with Deut. 30. 11, 12, 13, 14. And they will see that Calvin did rightly conclude from those places, that in the Judgment of St. Paul Salvation is promised us here in the Gospel upon a much easier Condition than it was in and by the Law.*

This conditionality of the Covenant of Grace is clearly proved also by all those places of Scripture which assure us,

(1.) That all who believe shall be justified and saved, *John 3. 16, 18, 36. John 6. 40. John 20. 31. Mark 16. 16. Acts 10. 43. and 13. 39. Rom. 4. 24. Gal. 2. 16. and 3. 9, 11.*

(2.) That they who believe not whilst they continue in Unbelief shall not be justified and saved. *John 3. 18, 36. and 8. 24. Mark 16. 16. Revel. 21. 8.* These Scriptures plainly shew that Faith is a Condition of the Covenant; because the definition and nature of a Condition agrees to it. For (1.) Faith is a Duty which God requires of us for obtaining the promised benefit of Justification and Salvation, 1 *John 3. 23. Rom. 10. 9.* (2.) God hath suspended his giving us the promised benefit of Justification and Salvation upon our performing the required Duty of Faith, so as to assure us, that if we performe the required Duty, we shall have the promised benefit; if we believe, we shall be justified and saved, but if we do not performe it, if we do not believe, we shall not be justified and saved. Nothing more is any way necessary to make Faith a Condition, but these two things; and we see by plain Scripture that both these things agree to a sincere Faith, therefore 'tis Condition of the Covenant, and so the Covenant is Conditional.

(2.) But now we must have a care that we do not deceive our selves and others, in thinking and saying that Faith singly and separately considered by it self is the whole, intire condition of the Gospel-Covenant, so as to exclude all others; for though it be the only condition in some respects, yet it is not the only Condition in all respects; It is the only receiving, consenting, trusting Condition; but the Scripture gives us plainly to understand that besides this receptive Condition, there is a dispositive Condition; besides Faith, the Condition of receiving Christ and Remission of sins through his Name, (*John 1. 12. Col. 2. 5. Acts 10. 43.*) There is Repentance which is the Condition, the performance whereof disposes and prepares us for the receiving of remission of sins, *Exod. 33. 5. The Lord said unto the people by Moses, Ye are a stiff-necked people, I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee: Therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee.* The Call to put off their Ornaments, was a call to Humiliation and Repentance. Till they had answered that Call, they were not fit that God should shew them any favour; and God speaks of himself (after the manner of men) as if he knew not what to do with them, till they had given some evidence of their Repentance. He was not willing to destroy them all; and yet it was not fit that he should pardon them, and shew favour to them till they had first repented of their sins. *Jerem. 36. 3. It may be that the house of Judah will bear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them, that they may return every man from his evil way, that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin.* Here the Lord intimates that it was not fit they should be forgiven, till they had repented; and therefore he ordered that *Jeremiah* should



should tell them from him all the evil which he threatned to bring upon them if they did not repent; to see if that would bring them to Repentance, that they might be fit for pardon; and that he might pardon them without dishonouring himself by so doing. We read also that *John the Baptist* was sent to Preach Repentance unto the *Jews*, *Matth.* 3. 1, 2. That by bringing them to Repentance, he might prepare them to receive the Lord Christ, (*Luke* 1. 17.) and to receive through him the Remission of their Sins. *Mark* 1. 4. And it is for this reason, that we call Repentance the *disposing* Condition in order to pardon of sin, because it fits and prepares us for the receiving of it through Faith in Christ Jesus. It may be our *Author* will not like this, but we little value that, if we have *Gods Word* for our Warrant; As we are sure we have for the thing we are upon: We will not differ with any about the *naming* of a thing, if we can come to an agreement about the thing it self. The *Thing* then we stand for, and are resolved (through the Lord's assistance) to stand for unto Death, is, That Repentance is a Condition of the New Covenant in order to forgiveness of sins, that is, *It is a Duty required of us for obtaining the forgiveness of our sins, so as that the forgiving us our sins, is suspended till we repent, and we are assured that if we repent we shall be forgiven, but if we do not repent, we shall not be forgiven.* This is all that we mean by saying that Repentance is a Condition of the Covenant: And need we prove this to Christians? We thought there had been no *Jew*, *Turk*, or *Papist* that had denyed this; But if any Protestants that own the Divine Authority of Holy Scripture do deny it, it will be no difficult matter to prove it: For,

(1.) That God hath required of us Repentance for obtaining the forgiveness of our sins, and hath suspended the forgiveness of our sins till we repent. This is evident from the words of the Evangelical Prophet, *Isa.* 1. 16, 17, 18. *Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes—Come now and let us reason together saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.* And from the words of *Jeremiah* in the fore-cited place, *Jerem.* 36. 3. *That they may return every man from his evil way, that I may forgive their Iniquity and their Sin:* And *Acts* 26. r8. *To turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sin.* These Scriptures shew that Repentance is so required of us in order to obtain the forgiveness of our sins, as that the forgiveness of our sins is suspended till we repent of them. Repentance is required of us as a means to the end we may receive forgiveness; and it is self-evident that the means must be used, before the end can be obtained. Though the end be first in intention, yet the means must be first in Execution,

(2:) God hath assured us of two things:

(1.) That if we sincerely repent, we shall be forgiven. Witness *Isa.* 55. 7. *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon,* *Ezek.* 18. 21, 22. *But if the wicked will turn from all his sins, — all his transgressions that he hath committed they shall not be mentioned unto him.* See *ver.* 30. *Prov.* 28. 13. *Who so confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy.* *Acts* 3. 19. *Repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out.*

(2.) That if we do not sincerely repent, we shall not be forgiven, *Psal.* 68. 21. *God shall wound the head of his Enemies, and the hairy scalp of such a one as goeth still in his trespasses.* *Luke* 13. 3, 5. *Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.* From all this it appears very evident, that Repentance is a Condition of obtaining the pardon of our sins, and the Condition must be performed in order of Nature before the benefit promised upon Condition be obtained; as we can prove (if common sense be denyed) from the Testimonies of *Dr. Twisse*, *Dr. Owen*, &c. But some object, Justification includes forgiveness of sin, in its essential Notion and Nature, and then if Repentance be before forgiveness of sin, it will be before Justification

Rification also? Answer, We admit the whole Argument, for it is a great truth that *Repentance is before Justification* at least in order of Nature. They object further if Repentance be before Justification, then it is either before or after Faith; but it cannot be *before Faith*, for it is impossible that a man should sincerely repent, before he believe: Nor can it be *after Faith*, if it be before Justification, for a man is justified by Faith, and that as soon as he believes. We answer, That men needed not to be deluded by such a *silly sophistry*, if they would distinguish, (1.) Between the Abiding Seed and Principle, and the Transient Act of Faith.

(2.) Between the Assenting Act of Faith, and its fiducially consenting act: For though Faith in the Principle of it be but one single Grace, yet in the Exercise of it, it hath several acts successively following one another, and yet not so closely neither but that the Act of Repentance may come between them. Now to apply these distinctions, we say that from Repentance's being before Justification, it doth by no means follow that it is altogether and in all respects before Faith. For, (1.) The Seed and Principle of Faith is before the Act of Repentance. (2.) The assenting Act of Faith is also before the Act of Repentance. And thus from a principle of Faith, and by the help of an Act of Faith the Soul sincerely repents in order to Justification and pardon of sin; then after the said Act of Repentance, there comes another Act of Faith, to wit the Act of Fiducial consent to receive Christ as he is offered in the Gospel, whereupon the penitent believing Soul is immediately justified and pardoned.

This we learn of Calvin, who in his Institutions, lib. 3. cap. 3. Sect. 19. writes thus, *Sic et Christus sum conciones auspiciatus est, &c.* So also Christ began his Sermons, Mark 1. 15. The Kingdom of God is at hand, repent ye and believe the Gospel. First he declares that the treasures of God's mercy were opened in him. Then (2.) He requires Repentance. And (3.) and lastly, He requires a trust or reliance on the promises of God.

Here we have the Lords order of things judiciously set forth. (1.) He declares that the Treasures of God's Mercy are opened in him. This Declaration of God's Infinite Mercy in Christ held forth to lost Sinners of Mankind, is the object of our Faith of assent, and we are bound to assent to it, as an infallible Truth, and to be firmly persuaded of it. (2.) He requires our Repentance, he requires that assenting to the Truth of the Gospel, and being firmly persuaded that God is upon terms of Mercy with us through him, we should repent and be heartily sorry that by our sins we have offended so merciful a God, and resolve in God's strength to do so no more. (3.) And lastly, That supposing we so repent from a principle of Faith assenting to the Revelation of God's great Mercy in Christ to lost Sinners indefinitely, he requires that we trust and rely on God's promises, and on Christ as held forth to us in the promises; that according to his promises he will for Christ's sake be merciful to us in pardoning us all our sins. When we are through Grace arrived at this Act of Faith, whereby we trust and rely on God's promises, and on Christ as held forth to us in the promises, then we are instantly pardoned, accepted as Righteous, and get a right to Life for the alone satisfactory meritorious Righteousness of our Lord Redeemer. But we could never attain to this Act of Faith, and thereby to pardon of sin for Christ's sake, if we did not first believe with the Faith of assent, that God through Christ is upon terms of Mercy and Peace with us. That is the first Act of Faith, and when it is of the right kind, and proceeds from the right Principle, the super-natural Seed of Faith put into the heart, it is through the influence of the Holy Spirit of mighty force and efficacy. (1.) To make us repent, to make us through Grace heartily sorry for having displeased and dishonoured so good and Merciful a God by our sins, and to make us resolve through Grace to do so no more. (2.) It is of as great force and efficacy to make us trust and rely on Gods promises, and on Christ revealed in the promises, that God according to his promises will for Christ's sake justify and pardon us.

Thus we have answered that frivolous Objection, and clearly shewed how true Repentance is in order before Justification and pardon of sin, and yet not altogether and

in all respects before Faith, but partly after, and partly before Faith; after the principle and assenting Act of Faith, but before the fiducially-consenting and trusting Act of Faith. And what though no Man could give a clear account of the exact order observed by our Souls in the acting of their several Graces, yet that should hinder no Christian from believing that true Repentance is in order before pardon of sin, because God, who cannot be hath plainly told us in the Scripture of Truth that it is in order before pardon; as hath been proved. If then we have any Faith in God and his Word, We should say, Let God be True, who ever proves a Liar. Certainly it is very unreasonable, foolish, and dangerous too; to deny, or doubt of that which is clear, because we cannot thoroughly understand that which is obscure, to wit, the precise order of the Souls acting its Graces. This may suffice at present to prove that the Gospel-promise of Justification and pardon of sin, is conditional, and that Faith and Repentance are the Condition of it.

(2.) In the second and last place, we shall briefly prove by Scripture, that the Gospel-promise of Glorification and Eternal Salvation is conditional, and that sincere obedience is the Condition of it. For the better understanding of our meaning in this matter, we premise a few things, As (1.) That this is to be understood upon supposition that a man lives some considerable time after that he is effectually called and justified, and pardoned upon his first believing and repenting, and that he hath space and opportunity to perform his Covenant Engagement unto the Lord, and to bring forth Fruits meet for Repentance. If the Man dye presently after his justification and pardon, there is no more required on his part; the Spirit perfects his begun Sanctification, and God through Christ consummates his Salvation without requiring any more of him, than what he is enabled to do as he is a dying. But if God give him time and opportunity, and he live, It is required that proportionably to his Talents and time he serve the Lord in Faith and Holy Obedience, that he renew his Faith and Repentance for pardon, as often as he finds that he has fallen into sin, and that he return to his Duty again, serving the Lord all his days in Faith, Hope, Love, Fear, Patience, Meekness, Humility, and Heavenly-mindedness, &c.

(2.) The Obedience that is required, as aforesaid, must be sincere, consisting in a real, true, hearty desire and endeavour to be faithful unto the Lord, and through Grace to stand perfect and compleat in all the Will of God, Col. 4. 12.

(3.) This sincere Obedience doth not satisfy the Justice of God for the least sin, nor doth it purchase or merit the least mercy, not so much as a Cup of cold Water, much less the unconceivably great blessing of Eternal Life and Glory.

(4.) As this Obedience doth not purchase or merit Eternal Life and Glory, it self, so neither doth it purchase or merit our right to it; and God's actual donation of it. For it was Christ alone that purchased our right to it by his Obediential Sufferings unto Death for us, and in our Justification God by his promise for Christ's sake gives us our right to it; and at the end of our days, when we leave this world, God will actually give Eternal Life and Glory to us for the sake of Christ, and by the hand and power of Christ, John 17. 2. Rom. 6. 23. So that

(5.) Since our sincere Obedience neither merits, nor gives us right unto, nor yet actually gives us possession of Eternal Life and Glory, it remains that it must be the means to be used, and condition to be performed on our part, that God for Christ's sake according to his promise may continue our right to, and may give us possession of Eternal Life and Glory.

**First Argument** Now this we prove first by plain Scripture, for we find in Holy Scripture that God requires our Obedience, as aforesaid, for obtaining the promised Benefit of Eternal Life and Glory, so as to suspend our obtaining of Eternal Glory in his Heavenly Kingdom on our performing of sincere obedience unto him, and continuing therein to the end.

1. Here is to be proved, first, That sincere obedience is required of us, and for that see, Mat. 11. 29, 30. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me — for my yoke is easy, and my

my burden is light. Mat. 12. 50. *Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in Heaven, the same is my Brother, and Sister, and Mother.* Mat. 23. 20. Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you *always*, even unto the end of the World. Luke 6. 46. *Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the thing which I say?* See also, John 13. 34. and 14. v. 13, 21, 23, 24. and 15. v. 10, 14, Rom. 8. 12, 13. and 8. v. 12, 13. and 12. v. 3. 1 Cor. 15. 58. Eph. 5. v. 1, 2, 3, 4, 13, 16. 1 Thess. 4. v. 1, 12, 13, 4. 1 Cor. 15. 58. Heb. 6. 11, 12. and 12. v. 1. and 13. v. 1, 5. Jam. 1. v. 4, 5, 19, 20, 21, 22, 27. and 2. v. 12, and 3. 13. 1 Pet. 13. 14, 15, 16, 17. and 2. v. 1, 2, 13, 12. and 3. v. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. and 5. v. 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9. 2 Pet. 3. 11, 17, 18. 3 John 2. 4, 5, 6. and 3. 18. and 2 John v. 8, 9. Jude v. 20, 21. Rev. 2. 5. Rev. 14. 6, 7, 12.

Secondly, It is to be proved that God hath suspended our obtaining of Eternal Glory in his Heavenly Kingdom, as our performing of sincere Obedience unto him, and continuing therein to the end. And to prove this, there needs no more but to demonstrate from Scripture, that if we be obedient unto the Lord, as is said, we shall obtain the possession of Eternal Glory in Heaven, but if we be not so obedient, we shall not obtain it. Now both these are so infallibly certain and evident, that really it is a shame that we should be put to prove them unto Men, that own themselves to be Christians. For,

1. That none shall obtain the possession of Eternal Glory in Heaven, but penitent, obedient, persevering Believers, is it not as clear as the Sun, from these Passages of Holy Writ? *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven.* Compare this with the following Verses, and you will see that our Saviour himself hath declared that Man to be a Fool, that doth not do his Commandments, and yet hopes that so living and dying, he shall be saved by him from the Flood of God's Wrath and Vengeance. Of all such disobedient Rebels, the Lord Christ will say, *Those mine enemies who would not that I should reign over them, bring hither and slay them before me.* And blessed Paul assures us, that when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels, he himself will in flaming fire take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel. St. Peter asks the Question, *What shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel?* And St. Paul answers it in the place now cited, that Christ himself will take vengeance of them in flaming fire, and they shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. The same Apostle saies again in another place, *The Just shall live by faith, but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.* The Words [*Any man*] are not in the Original, and therefore they are Printed in a different Character. It is *id est, cancellatus*. If he draw back, if the Just Man that lives by Faith, if he draw back, if he Apostatize, the Lord's Soul will have no pleasure in him, that is, the Lord will abhor him unto perdition: As appears by the Context. This passage is parallel to that of Ezekiel, when, (or, if) a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them, for his iniquity that he hath done shall be dye. And if any man should go about to persuade people to believe that they may be saved, though they dye in such sins without Repentance, blessed and Holy Paul by the Spirit of the Lord hath cautioned us all against such as Deceivers, saying as it is written, *Let no man deceive you with vain words; for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.* And assures us, that without holiness, no man shall see the Lord. And,

2. On the other hand is it not as clear that all persevering, penitent, obedient Believers shall certainly obtain the possession of Eternal Glory in Heaven, through the Infinite Mercy of God, and Merits of Christ? For doth not our Lord himself say, *Verily, verily, if a man keep my sayings, he shall*

*shall never see death*: That is, the second and eternal death. And as for bodily death, he shall at the last day be saved and delivered from that also. For

*John 5. 28, 29.* as it is written, Then they that have done good shall come forth of their graves unto the resurrection of life. And therefore as he saith

*John 13. 17.* again, If ye know these things, happy are ye, if ye do them. And

*Rom. 6. 23.* his Apostle Paul saith that God gives eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. But to whom doth he give it? Why, that is visible from

the 22. Verse immediately before. It is to them who being made free from sin, and become servants to God, have their fruit unto holiness. It is, we say, to them, that God through Christ, gives Eternal Life, as a Reward of their Holy Obedience and well-doing. God in Christ is most certainly a Rector or Ruler who according to his

*Revel. 11. 18.* Law of Grace, will distribute at last glorious Rewards to all that

*2 Cor. 5. 10.* fear his Name, small and great. And as St. James saith, Then

*James 1. 25.* shall the Obedient Believer, the doer of the Lord's Work, be

*Rom. 2. 6, 7.* blessed in his deed. Then as Holy Paul says, To them who by

patient continuance in well-doing, have sought for glory and honour, and immortality, God will render eternal life. This God will do at

the Last Day to all that have so continued in well-doing to the end. For so the Spirit of Truth hath plainly said by Paul; and it is infallibly true,

*1 Cor. 7. 19.* with and will continue to be for ever true; Let who will contradict it,

*Gal. 5. 6.* and say it is false. Blessed Paul assures again, that Circumcision is

*Heb. 5. 9.* nothing, and Uncircumcision is nothing but the keeping of the Commandments of God. And that Christ is become the Author of eternal sal-

vation to all them that obey him. Yea, our Lord Christ himself saith,

*Rev. 2. 10.* and *3. 21.* Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a Crown of life; and

*Rev. 22. 14.* that he who overcomes, shall sit with him on his Throne. To all which agrees that we read in the Last of the Revelations, Blessed are they

that do his (Christ's) commandments, that they may have right to the

tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. Here we see the Lord him-

self hath declared them blessed that sincerely keep his Commandments, because

thereby,

1. They have a Right to the Tree of Life, whilst they live. And,

2. When they dye, they enter upon the full possession of that which before they had

a Right unto. They enter in through the gates into the city.

But you will say, how have we right unto and entrance upon full possession of Eter-

nal Life and Glory by keeping Christ's Commandments? We Answer, the keeping

Christ's Commandments doth not merit, or give us either one or the other of them; but

it is the way and means which we use, and the Condition which through Grace we per-

form for the having our right to the Tree of Life continued to us, or not taken from us

whilst we live: And for our having full possession of Life and Happiness given us

when we die. So that 'tis God who first for Christ's sake gave, that still continues

our right to us; and at last will for the same cause, that is, for Christ's sake, give us

full possession: But he will do all this for us in the way of continued Faith, and

Obedience; and on Condition that we sincerely believe in Christ, and keep his Com-

mandments unto the end.

Thus we have proved from Scripture, That sincere Obedience to the Law of

Christ, is a Condition of Glorification, as our first believing and repenting is the

Condition on our part of our Justification, and of the pardon of our Sins.

For as the definition of a Gospel-Condition agrees to Faith, and Repentance, with

respect to our Justification and Pardon of Sin; so it agrees to sincere Obedience

with respect to our Glorification, and Eternal Salvation. And to whatsoever the

definition of a Gospel-Condition agrees, to that the Nature and Essence of a

Gospel-Condition must agree also. From all which we conclude that the Covenant

of Grace is Conditional with respect to the subsequent blessings and benefits of it.



The two principal promises, to wit of *Justification* and *Glorification* are certainly conditional; which was the thing to be proved. And having first demonstrated it by Scripture,

Second Head of Arguments.

We, Secondly, prove it by reason agreeable to Scripture: And,

*Reason 1. First.* If the Covenant of Grace be not Conditional with respect to its subsequent Blessings and Benefits, particularly, if the Promise of Justification and Pardon of sin be not conditional, we do not see how it is possible for a Minister to be faithful to God, to his own Conscience, and to the Souls of the People in preaching the Gospel to them. It is true, it is easily conceivable how a Minister may be faithful in laying before People the Commandments of the Lord, and in telling them that those Commandments oblige them to believe and repent; And that if they do not believe and repent, they will grievously sin against the Lord, and draw down his wrath upon their own Souls. But now when he proceeds to encourage them to believe and repent, by setting forth to them God's Promise of Justification and Pardon of Sin, we do not conceive how he can do it honestly and faithfully, if the Promise of Justification and pardon of Sin be not conditional. For when a Minister is preaching to a promiscuous, mixed Multitude of People, and for their encouragement to believe and repent, is declaring to them Gods Gospel-promise of Justification and pardon of Sin, either he must declare and preach this Promise to them conditionally or absolutely? If conditionally assuring them from the Lord, that they shall be justified and pardoned, through Christ's Righteousness imputed to them, if they sincerely believe and repent, then the Promise itself is conditional, and the Covenant also is in that respect conditional: For if there be no Condition in the Gospel-promise and Covenant, how can the Minister preach it conditionally to the People? Doth he not take God's Name in vain, and abuse the People also, by telling them from the Lord, that all they who perform the Condition of the Gospel-promise, by believing and repenting, shall have the promised Benefit, to wit, Justification and pardon of Sin; if there be no Condition in the Promise, necessary to be performed by them for obtaining the promised Benefit? Either then a Minister must not preach the Promise conditionally to the People, or there is, and must be a Condition in the Promise: and if there be a Condition in the Promise, then we have what we aim at, for we desire no more to prove the Covenant of Grace to be conditional. Eut,

2. If our Author will say, that the Minister must preach the Promise of Justification and pardon, absolutely, to all the People; assuring them from the Lord, that they are, or shall be justified and pardoned through Christ, absolutely, whether they perform any Condition or not, whether they do any duty or not; whether they believe and repent or not: Then we Answer, That the Minister, who shall preach to a mixed Multitude, or indeed to any at such a rate, is such a Preacher as all People, who would not be deluded to their Souls ruine and destruction, should have a care of, and avoid as an Impostor and Deceiver. For assuredly, It is most false and delusive for a Minister to tell a Multitude of sinful People, that they shall all be justified and pardoned absolutely, without complying with any terms, or performing any Condition in order to the obtaining of the promised Benefit of Justification and Pardon. If the Promise of Justification and pardon be said to be made unto Sinners as Sinners, and that nothing is required of Men, in order to their being justified and pardoned, but that they be Sinners; if our Author, or any for him, could prove that; it is confessed, that he might preach, and offer Justification and pardon of Sin, absolutely, to all the People that hear him, and the consequence of it would be, that all Men, even the greatest Rogues that come at any time into our Congregations, should therefore believe that they are justified and pardoned, because they are Sinners; for that is all that is required of them, to wit, that they be Sinners; and they are infallibly sure of that.

But before he, or any, be allowed that Liberty to preach and offer Justification and

Pardon of Sin absolutely to all, he must prove, that God hath made up *absolute Promise* of Justification and Pardon of Sin unto *Sinners as Sinners*; and hath given him Com- mission to preach and offer Justification and Pardon *absolutely to Sinners, as such*. Which we are sure, neither he, nor any Man else, can ever do.

For our parts, we declare to the World, that we cannot preach to the People, so as to tell them from the Lord, that the Promise of Justification, and pardon of Sin, is made to them *as they are Sinners absolutely without any Condition* to be performed on their part, for qualifying them to obtain the promised Benefit; because this would be in effect, to tell them, that God will justify and pardon all the Men in the World, and that he will save and glorify every Man of them, since they are all Sinners, and no other Condition, no nor Qualification neither, but that, is required of them in order to their being justified and pardoned. Whatever Promise God hath made to Men *as Sinners*, he hath certainly made to *all Men*, because all Men are Sinners. We remember the Rule of reasoning, which many Years agoe we learned in the Schools, that the consequence holds good, and never fails *a quatenus ad omne*. If then God hath made an *absolute Promise* to *Sinners as such*, that he will justify and pardon them, it follows necessarily, that *all Men*, without exception, being Sinners, they shall certainly be *all* justified and pardoned; (yea, and glorified too, for whom God justifies, he will glorify.) The Reason of this is, because God will certainly make good *all his absolute Promises*. But it is an abominable falsehood that all Men in the World, without exception, shall be certainly justified and pardoned, therefore it must needs be a great falsehood also, that God hath made an *absolute promise to Sinners as such*, that he will justify and pardon them. And since God hath made no such absolute Promise, we that are Ministers, and speak to the People in God's Name, cannot absolutely preach such a Promise to the People, without deceiving and deluding them, which our Consciences will not suffer us to do.

If this do not satisfy our Authour, and those of his way, but they will still deny the Conditionality of the Covenant, and think to put by both the Horns of our Dilemma, because there may be a third way of preaching the Promise of Justification to the People, that is, they can preach it *neither absolutely, nor conditionally*, but *some other way*; we would entreat them not to conceal that other way from us, who are willing to learn of them, or of any that will be so kind as to inform us aright, where we are mistaken. In order to this, we desire our Authour (who takes upon him to be the Informer of the Ministers,) to assign us a *Medium*, or *Mean* between a *conditional* and *absolute Promise*, and consequently between preaching to the People, a Gospel-promise absolutely or conditionally, upon supposition that we preach it at all. Hitherto we have thought that *all Promises are either absolute or conditional*, and we know none of a *neutral* Nature that are neither absolute, nor conditional; and consequently, we have believed, that if we preach the Gospel-promise of Justification to the People, we must of necessity preach it either *absolutely*, or *conditionally*; and the like we say of any other Gospel-promise, we must preach it either *absolutely*, or *conditionally*, according to the nature of the promise it self, as it may be *absolute*, or *conditional*. If our Authour will shew us a Promise that is of a *middle* nature, and is *neither absolute nor conditional*, he will indeed do something to purpose, something towards the rectifying our Method of preaching the Promises. But we judge it impossible for him to shew us a Promise of a *middle* nature, that is neither *absolute*, nor *conditional*; and that because *absolute promise*, and *conditional promise* are, in effect, *contradictories*, and there neither is, nor can be any *Medium*, or *Mean* between *contradictories*. And that they are *contradictories*, we thus prove, *To suspend the thing promised, on a condition annexed to the Promise; And not to suspend the thing promised, on a condition annexed to the Promise are plainly contradictories*. This Proposition is self-evident if the terms of it be understood. But it is *essential unto a conditional Promise to suspend the thing promised on a condition annexed to the Promise*; and on the other side, *It is essential unto an absolute promise not to suspend the thing promised on a condition annexed to the Promise*.

*Promise.* This Proposition is also clear from the very nature of these two sorts of Promises. The Conclusion then follows necessarily that *therefore a conditional Promise, and an absolute Promise are contradictory*, and there can be no middle Promise between them, no Promise, that is, neither absolute, nor conditional. For every Promise possible must either *suspend*, or *not suspend* the thing promised on a condition annexed, and to every Promise possible must be either *conditional* or *absolute*: Which was the thing to be demonstrated.

We have understood that there are some who leave no Stone unturnd to avoid the force of the Arguments, which prove the Covenant of Grace to be conditional as aforesaid; and they think to do it by saying, That there is an Order of Grace which God observes in promising, and in dispensing according to Promise his Blessings and Benefits unto his People, so as not to make one thing to be the condition of another, but so as to make one thing to go in order before another. To this we Answer, we freely grant that God doth both promise Blessings and Benefits unto his People in a certain order; and also that he doth orderly dispense them unto his People according to his Promises; But we utterly deny that God's Order of Grace doth hinder one thing in that order from being the condition of another; and on the contrary we affirm that it rather makes one thing to be the condition of another: And that for this Reason, because the Order of Grace, which the Brethren speak of, either (1.) It is an Order in the Promise of Justification and Pardon, (of which alone our Question now is,) to wit, in the promise [if you sincerely believe with a Faith working by love, you shall be justified and pardoned through Christ.] Or (2.) It is an order out of the promise, but in God's will with respect to the promise. If the first, that is, if it be an order of Grace in the promise, then it is plainly a Conditional order of Grace; for the promise is conditional (as we have proved) and the gracious order of it is this, That whoever performs the Condition of it, that is, believes sincerely with a Faith working by Love, shall have the blessing and benefit of it, shall be justified and pardoned: Thus the order of Grace in the Conditional Promise being plainly a Conditional order, we are but just where we were at for the order of Grace in the promise, being but conditional; it doth not help us one jot to avoid the conditionality of the Promise and Covenant.

(2.) But if they choose to say, that it is the second, to wit, that it is an order of Grace out of the promise, but in God's will with respect to the promise, and so it is an absolute order of God's will, that if People sincerely believe they shall be justified and pardoned; We heartily grant that it is so, there is such a gracious Order, or Ordination in and of God's Will, and it is plainly revealed also in his Written Gospel. But what then? This really makes against our Brethren, and for us: And that because this absolute order of Grace in God's will concerning the Promise, is so far from overthrowing, that on the contrary, it most strongly establisheth and confirmeth the conditionality of the Promise. For is not this a good, strong, unavoidable consequence, God of his free grace hath absolutely ordained (that Faith shall be a condition of the Covenant, and) that this shall be a true conditional Gospel-promise [If People sincerely believe in Christ, they shall be justified and pardoned.] Therefore it is a true conditional Gospel-promise, and cannot be otherwise. All this is to us very certain and evident, and therefore must conclude that we have proved by reason agreeable to Scripture, that the Covenant of Grace is conditional, as aforesaid. And without going upon this Ground and Principle, we do not conceive how Ministers can preach the Gospel honestly and faithfully to all sorts of Men they meet with, as by our Commission we are obliged to do. Mark 16. 15, 16. Rom. 10. 8, 9.

*Reason 2.* The Covenant promise of Eternal Life and Glory is Conditional, therefore the Covenant of Grace is Conditional with respect to its subsequent blessings and benefits. The Consequence is self-evident, because Eternal Life and Glory is one of the principal subsequent blessings of the Covenant of Grace: We prove the antecedent against Mr. Marshall's Book; and against our Author who highly approves and commends it. If sincere Obedience to the Lord, be the Con-

dition of the Covenant promise of Eternal Life and Glory, then the Covenant Promise of Eternal Life and Glory is really conditional. But so it is that sincere Obedience to the Lord, is the Condition of the Covenant-Promise of Eternal Life and Glory. Therefore that Covenant-Promise is Conditional. The consequence of the first Proposition is self-evident. We prove the second Proposition, to wit that sincere Obedience to the Lord, is the Condition of the Covenant-promise of Eternal Life and Glory; Because, whatsoever is so required of us as a Duty in order to the obtaining of the Eternal Life and Glory promised, that our obtaining thereof is by the promise suspended on our performing that Duty; and we are assured by the Lord that if we perform that Duty, we shall obtain, but if we perform not that Duty, we shall not obtain the Eternal Life and Glory promised: That is, the Condition of the Covenant promise of Eternal Life and Glory (it being the very definition and essential Nature of a Gospel-Condition, that it be a Duty required as aforesaid: ) But sincere Obedience to the Lord is a Duty so required in order to the obtaining of the Eternal Life and Glory promised; as most evidently appears by the many plain Testimonies of God's Word, whereby we have already proved sincere Obedience to be a Duty so required. Therefore sincere Obedience to the Lord is and must be the Condition of the Covenant Promise of Eternal Life and Glory.

If our Author (or any for him) should say, that it is true, *Sincere Obedience to the Lord's Command of believing*, is required as aforesaid; but *sincere obedience to any other Command of the Lord* is not necessarily required as aforesaid, in order to the obtaining of the promised Blessing of Eternal Life and Glory. We reply, (1.) That if sincere Obedience to the Lord's Command of believing, be required as necessary (in the way aforesaid) to the obtaining of the promised Blessing of Eternal Life and Glory, then even according to that Answer, the Covenant-promise of Eternal Life and Glory, is still conditional; and Faith continued and persevered in to the end, (which is that sincere Obedience to the Lord's Command of believing) is the Condition of it: For the Definition and Essential Nature of a Gospel-condition agrees to Faith under that Consideration. (2.) We reply, That the sincere Obedience, which consists in the formal Elicit Act, or Acts of believing, is not all the sincere Obedience which is required as aforesaid. And we thus prove it, *If it be false that no sincere Obedience is required as aforesaid, but the Act of Faith, then it is true that some Obedience is required as aforesaid, besides the Act of Faith.* This proposition is self-evident, because no obedience but the Act of Faith, and some obedience besides the Act of Faith, are manifest contradictories; and two contradictories cannot possibly be both true, nor both false; but one of them must always be true, and the other false; and it cannot possibly be otherwise. This being clear and undeniable, we proceed to the next proposition and subsume. But it is false, *That no sincere obedience is required as aforesaid, but the Act of Faith.* For if no sincere Obedience but the Act of Faith, be required as aforesaid, that is, be required as indispensably necessary to obtain the promised blessing of Eternal Life and Glory; then it follows by necessary consequence that a Christian (our Author may instance in and apply it to himself or any other as he pleaseth,) We say it necessarily follows that a Christian (if he doth but keep Faith, and now and then put it forth into Acts, in obedience to the single Command of believing) is safe and runs no hazard of losing Eternal Life and Glory, although he live in the habitual constant omission of all other Duties, and in the habitual constant commission of all other sins, except the sin of formal unbelief, that is, he is safe and runs no hazard of losing Eternal Life and Glory, though he never love nor fear God and Christ, nor exercise any other Grace, or perform any other Duty; though he never love his Neighbours, nor deal justly and honestly by them; yea upon this supposed Principle he is safe, and runs no hazard of his Salvation, though he habitually and constantly do the quite contrary, and live in all other the most abominable sins against God and Man, except the sin of formal unbelief. For though these be sins, great, abominable sins of Omission and Commission against the Law of God; yet to him who is supposed to be a sincere Believer, and to keep his Faith under all these sins of Omission and

and Commission, the said Duties are not commanded, nor the sins forbidden under the penalty of losing his Salvation; or if the Law strictly considered as a Covenant of Works command those Duties, and forbid those sins under that penalty: Yet from him being a Believer, the Gospel takes off the penalty, as fast as the Law lays it on; or rather (according to the Principle we are now speaking of) the Gospel binds the Laws hands, so that though it would, yet it cannot lay its penalty upon the man (he being a Believer) although he never so much deserves it by the fore said abominations against God and Man: And consequently he may omit all Duties (except the Duty of believing,) and commit all sins imaginable (except the sin of formal unbelief,) and yet remain safe, and run no hazard of losing the promised blessing of Eternal Life and Glory.

Far be it from us to charge our *Author* or any of his way, with such abominable practices; We abhor to charge any Man with holding the absurd consequences of his opinion, which he doth not own. We design no such things, nor indeed any reflection at all by this Argument; No, but our real and whole design is to shew the natural necessary consequence (and danger) of holding the opinion that no sincere Obedience, but Faith, is required of Christians by the Covenant and Law of Christ as indispensably necessary to the obtaining of Eternal Life and Glory, and thereby to evince that (as was said;) It is false that no sincere Obedience, but the Act of believing is required as indispensably necessary to obtain Eternal Life and Glory. And this, we think, we have effectually done; for if no sincere Obedience, but the Act of believing, be required of Christians by the Law of Christ, as indispensably necessary to obtain Eternal Life and Glory; then it is self-evident that they are safe, and may obtain Eternal Life and Glory, if they have the Act of Faith, and the Obedience which by it they yield to the Command of believing: Though they want all other sincere Obedience, and that is, though they live in the Love and Practice of all manner of sins, except the sin of Unbelief.

*Obj. 1.* If our *Author* object, (1.) That though sincere Obedience distinct from Faith be not required of Christians as indispensably necessary to obtain Eternal Life and Glory, yet it is required as necessary to *signifie and evidence* to a Christian the sincerity of his Faith, which he cannot be sure of, unless it be evidenced to him by sincere Obedience distinct from it self.

*Ans.* We answer, (1.) We suppose he knows well enough that there are some who hold the quite contrary, to wit, that it is Faith only which is indispensably necessary to evidence the sincerity of a mans Obedience, and not sincere Obedience to evidence the sincerity of his Faith. (2.) Be it so, that sincere Obedience is indispensably necessary to assure a Christian of the sincerity of his Faith, yet if it be not likewise indispensably necessary to his obtaining Eternal Life and Glory, he may be really safe and in no danger of losing Eternal Life and Glory, if he have a sincere Faith, which is the only thing indispensably necessary, though he want all sincere Obedience (distinct from Faith,) which is pretended not to be indispensably necessary to the obtaining of Eternal Life and Glory. It is true, the man cannot know that he is safe, he cannot be sure and full of Spiritual Comfort; without the evidence of his Faith, that is, without sincere Obedience: But for all that, if he really have Faith, he is safe with respect to another World, though he want sincere Obedience as the evidence of his safety by Faith, and that is, though he live in the Love and Practice of all manner of sins, both of Omission and Commission, except the sin of formal Unbelief; which we think is a very great absurdity following upon the fore said Opinions.

*Obj. 2.* If our *Author* object, (2.) That here we suppose an impossibility, to wit, That a sincere Faith may be without any other sincere Obedience, whereas though sincere Obedience be not required as indispensably necessary to obtain Eternal Life and Glory, yet there always is and will be sincere Obedience where there is a sincere Faith, and can never be separated from it.

*We Answer,* (1.) That we do not argue from an impossibility as such, but wholly abstracting from its being possible or impossible for a sincere Faith to be without sincere



sincere Obedience to the Lord in other things required of Christians, *per impossibile*, be false that no sincere Obedience, but the Act of Faith, is under the Gospel-Covenant required of Christians, as indispensably necessary to obtain the promised blessing of Eternal Life and Glory; because if that were not false, then this would be necessarily true, that though a Christian should live in the Love and Practice of all other abominations, yet if (*per impossibile vel impossibile*) he retain but the Act of Faith, he is safe and secure with respect to his Eternal Salvation, and run no hazard of losing Eternal Life and Glory. It is only this consequence which we are concerned to make good, and that we have done. But though the consequence, and inference be good, yet the consequent or thing inferred, we justly account to be a very great absurdity, and from that absurdity we prove the falsehood of the antecedent and principle from whence it follows by necessary consequence; that is, the falsehood of the Principle, which faith that no sincere Obedience, but the act of Faith is indispensably necessary to Salvation.

(1.) We Answer, that though we suppose, and grant it impossible for a sincere Faith to be without sincere Obedience, yet we may very well say, that it is a great falsehood that no other Obedience but that of the formal elicit Act of Faith, is required of Christians as indispensably necessary to Salvation; and may prove it by this Argument. Suppose *per impossibile* that a Christian have a sincere Faith separated from sincere Obedience, if nothing but a sincere Act of Faith be required of him as indispensably necessary to Salvation, he is safe and runs no hazard of losing Eternal Salvation, though he lead a wicked life as aforesaid. But this is false and absurd, therefore that principle from whence this follows is false and absurd also, that is, it is false and absurd that nothing but an Act of Faith is required as indispensably necessary to Salvation. And not only Logick allows us to argue thus sometimes from a supposed impossibility, but even our blessed Saviour who is truth itself hath done it before us. If I should say, (quoth our Saviour) I know not the Father, I should be a liar like unto you; but I know him, &c. In like manner S. Paul argues *ab impossibili*, saying, Though we or an Angel from heaven, preach another Gospel to you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. And he is accursed.

(2.) We Answer, That when it is said, that sincere Faith cannot be without sincere Obedience, the meaning is, that sincere Faith is of an Obediential Nature, and is of itself apt to put us upon the several Acts of sincere Obedience, and will certainly do it, if it be rightly used, and put forth into strong vigorous Acts, if the Spirit of the Lord concur with it, if it be not hindered by the flesh, and by the prevalency of temptations: But the meaning is not that sincere Faith, always actually and infallibly produces the *imperat* acts of sincere Obedience, as necessarily as the Sun produces light, and as the Fire produceth Heat. For the Principle of sincere Faith doth not so necessarily produce its own formal elicit Acts; much less doth it so necessarily produce the Acts of other graces: Principles and Habits, whose Acts are not the formal elicit, but the *imperat* Acts of Faith. And it is but too well known, by sad experience, that the Principle of sincere Faith, (or even the languid, weak Act of that Principle,) doth not necessarily, and infallibly alwayes produce all those Acts of sincere Obedience to the Lord, which are necessary towards the obtaining of Eternal Life and Glory. For had not David and Solomon a Principle of sincere Faith, (and who can say and praye that they had not then some weak, languid Acts of Faith?) And yet that Faith in them, for some considerable time, was separated from that sincere Repentance and Obedience, which is required as indispensably necessary to the obtaining possession of Eternal Life and Glory. This is too evident to be denied. And surely what hath been, is possible to be, though we heartily wish that it may never actually be any more; and that none of God's People may ever fall so foully, nor lie so long in Sin, as David and Solomon did. But we think our Authors (or any for him) will find it a hard Task to prove, that sincere Faith (both as to the Habit, and some weak Act)

cannot be, for some time, actually separated from such important Acts of Repentance and sincere Obedience, as are indispensably necessary to the obtaining possession of Eternal Life and Glory in Heaven; and further he may find it a Task no less hard to determine precisely how long time they may be actually separated, but not one Minute longer. If he think, that he can do either, or both of these, we do intreat him to do so, for in truth it will be a kindness to us, who do really find the difficulty so great, that we are not able to master it without help.

(4.) We Answer, That though it were well proved that sincere Faith can in no case be separated for one Minute from the imperative Acts of that sincere Repentance and Obedience which is indispensably necessary to the obtaining possession of Eternal Life and Glory in Heaven; yet it doth by no means follow that Faith only, and not sincere Obedience distinct from Faith, is required of us, as indispensably necessary to the obtaining possession of Eternal Life and Glory in Heaven; for Faith and Obedience may both be required, and we have already proved by plain Scripture that they are both required as indispensably necessary to the obtaining of Eternal Life and Glory, and without our having both as the Lord hath required, we cannot be out of danger of coming short of Eternal Life and Glory. The clear evidence of this Truth, hath made our ablest, and most judicious Divines acknowledge that upon supposition, that the Saints fallen into gross sins against Knowledge and Conscience, like those of David and Solomon, should dye in them before they had, through Grace, returned unto their Obedience to the Lord, renewed both their Faith, and their Repentance, and got both the Guilt and Filth of those Sins washed and purged away by the most precious Blood, and holy Spirit of Christ, they would be damned, and lost for ever. This Mr. Rutherford in his *Examen Arminianismi*, p. 620, acknowledges to be a Truth in these Words, [*Nisi renati (in atrocis peccata lapsi) resipiscerent, in aeternum ipsis perundum esset, juxta comminationes Evangelicar.*] Unless the Regenerate (after they have fallen into atrocious sins) did repent, they must perish everlastingly, according to the threatnings of the Gospel. Of this Persuasion were our excellent Divines in the Synod of Dord, so was Mr. Perkins, Bishop Abbot, Downham, Mr. Burges, Pareus, Turretin, &c. as shall be shewed hereafter by the express Words of most of them. This same Truth hath also been acknowledged and maintained by the French Divines, who Answered that pestilent Book of the *Jansenians*, called the *Renversement* (and corruption) of the *Morals of Jesus Christ by the Errors of the Calvinists in the point of Justification*. Jurieu and others in answer to that most virulent Book, go upon our Principle aforesaid, and thereby vindicate the Reformed Churches from the blasphemous Reproaches which the *Jansenians* cast upon us all, upon pretence that we all hold the abominable Opinion aforesaid, that we are safe as to our Eternal State, if we have but a true Faith, though we live in the love and practice of all manner of Villanies, except Unbelief.

(5.) One great Reason, (we do not say the only, but one great Reason) on our part, why a sincere Faith is of its own Nature obediential, that is, it inclines to obedience, and is of it self naturally apt to produce in us sincere Obedience, and will not fail to do it, if it be rightly used, and be not hindered; It is this; a sincere Faith firmly assents to the Truth of the fore said Commands, Promises, and Threatnings of the Gospel, whereby we have proved that sincere Obedience is by the Lord made indispensably necessary unto, and the condition of obtaining Eternal Salvation; and from the infallible Truth of God's Word it assures us that there is no obtaining of Eternal Salvation, unless we be sincerely obedient unto the Lord; that if through Grace we be sincerely obedient we shall be saved; but if not, we shall be damned. Now this Faith acting upon the several parts of God's Word, according to their respective Natures, is of great force and efficacy to determine us unto the practice of sincere Obedience; (1.) the Faith of God's Word commanding sincere Obedience, as indispensably necessary to Salvation, makes our Conscience bow down to God's Authority in the Command, and makes us endeavour to yield Obedience to it. (2.) The Faith of

God's Word of threatening against the disobedient Rebel, works  
 2 Cor. 5. 10, 11. upon our Fears, and Fear restrains us from disobedience, lest  
 Heb. 4. 1. thereby we should bring upon our selves the everlasting punishment  
 threatened. (3.) The Faith of God's Word of Promise: to

obedient Believers, works upon our hope, and hope quickens us unto Obedience, as  
 the necessary means to obtain the Eternal Reward promised; It makes us follow after  
 Holiness in expectation of Happiness, 1 John 3. 2, 3. It is essential to saving Faith  
 to act thus differently on the several parts of the Word according to their respective  
 Natures, making us tremble at the Threatnings, embrace the Promises, and by that means  
 obey the Commands of God. As our Confession of Faith intimates in Chap. 14. Art. 2.  
 Now our Faith its being thus naturally fitted to make us sincerely obedient unto the  
 Lord in all his Commands and Institutions, ariseth partly from hence, that the indi-  
 spensable necessity of sincere Obedience, in order to the obtaining of Eternal Salvation, is  
 one of the objects of a sound Faith, which it firmly assents to, and is strongly perswaded  
 of: For this firm assent, and strong perswasion, that sincere Obedience is so necessary  
 to Salvation, will not let us rest, but will be still putting us on to yeild sincere Obedi-  
 ence unto the Law of Christ, as that which must be done or we shall be undone  
 for ever. But if a Man be once firmly perswaded in his own Mind, that no sincere  
 Obedience, but only the Act of Faith in way of Obedience, is indispensably necessary to  
 Salvation; his Faith will not have so much Power over him to make him sincerely  
 obedient unto the Lord, in order to Salvation. Indeed it is much to be doubted  
 whether that Man hath a sincere Faith at all, who is under the Power of this erro-  
 neous Opinion, that no sincere Obedience distinct from the Act of Faith, is indispensably  
 necessary to Salvation; for a sincere, sound Faith amongst other of its Objects, it be-  
 lieves this for one, that as, first, Faith, so next sincere Obedience is indispensably necessa-  
 ry to Salvation.

Thus we have proved our Second Proposition, to wit, It is false, that no sincere  
 Obedience (but the Act of Faith) is required as indispensably necessary to the obtain-  
 ing the promised Blessing of Eternal Life and Glory.

Now both the Premises being certainly and evidently true, the Conclusion follows  
 unavoidably, which is this, That it is true, that some Obedience (besides the Act of  
 Faith) is required as indispensably necessary to the obtaining of the promised Blessing  
 of Eternal Life and Glory. For who is so stark blind as not to see that if it be false  
 that no Obedience, but Faith is indispensably necessary to Salvation, (as we have proved  
 it to be false;) then its contradictory is true, that some Obedience, besides Faith, is  
 indispensably necessary to Salvation. We proceed then, and thus argue, If some Obedience,  
 besides Faith, be indispensably necessary to Salvation, then that some Obedience, besides  
 Faith, must be either a most perfect, personal, sinless Obedience, or an imperfect, perso-  
 nal, sincere Obedience. There can be no other personal Obedience, but one of these  
 two, thought indispensably necessary to Salvation. But it is not, it cannot be a most  
 perfect, personal, sinless Obedience; for if such an Obedience were required, as indispen-  
 sably necessary to Salvation; then no Man could be saved, because no meer Man ever  
 performed such Obedience to the Law of God in this life, no Man ever lived so holily  
 as never to sin in Thought, Word or Deed, after his Conversion and Justification: And  
 so if such sinless, personal Obedience were required of all as indispensably necessary to  
 Salvation, no Flesh could be saved, but all would be damned; notwithstanding all that  
 Christ hath done and suffered to purchase Salvation for his People. Christ's blood  
 would have been so far shed in vain, that not one Soul would be saved by it, which were  
 Blasphemy to affirm; and therefore it cannot be that now under the Gospel-Covenant,  
 a most perfect, personal, sinless Obedience is required of us, as indispensably necessary  
 to Salvation. Since therefore some personal Obedience, besides Faith, is indispen-  
 sably necessary to Salvation, and it is not a most perfect, personal, sinless Obedience,  
 that is so necessary, we must of necessity conclude, that it is an imperfect, personal sin-  
 cere Obedience, which besides Faith, is indispensably necessary to Salvation. The other  
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most perfect, personal, sinless Obedience is not attainable in this Life by the ordinary assistance of God's Grace, but this personal, imperfect, yet sincere Obedience, is attainable in this Life, by the ordinary helps of God's Spirit and Grace. For Christ's yoke is easy, and his burden is light; Mat. 11. 30. And God's Commandments are not grievous; 1 John. 5. 3. The Spirit helpeth our infirmities; Rom. 8. 26. Through the Spirit we mortifie the deeds of the body; Rom. 8. 13. We purify our souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit; Eccl. 1 Pet. 1. 22. In short though without Christ we can do nothing; John 15. 5. Yet through Christ strengthening us we can do all things; Phil. 4. 13. that is, we can do all things which Christ requires of us as indispensably necessary to our obtaining the promised Blessing of Eternal Life and Salvation. If any should object against this, and say, that a Man may be saved, although he do not perform that Obedience which is indispensably necessary to Salvation, because though he fall into very great Sins, yet he may repent of them, and so be saved through Christ upon his repentance. We Answer, (1.) That it is contradictory Non-sense to say a Man may be saved without that sincere Obedience, which God hath made indispensably necessary to his Salvation. (2.) We answer with Ambrosius and others, as aforesaid, that when a Regenerate justified Man falls into gross Sins against Knowledge and Conscience, he cannot be saved whilst he continues in those Sins without Repentance, for then he doth not walk after the Spirit; but rather after the Flesh; then he is going *astray from the way that leads to Life and Salvation*, and is walking in the *broad way that leads to destruction*: And therefore if he do not turn back, and return again into the narrow way that leads to Life and Salvation; he will certainly be undone, he will perish everlastingly; Rom. 8. 13. *If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die*. But when a justified Man, that had fallen, as is said, rises again by Repentance, he returns to his Obedience: And we define it may be observed and remembered, that when we say sincere Obedience is indispensably necessary to Salvation, we do not mean that it is required, as absolutely, and indispensably necessary to our Salvation, that our sincere Obedience be never at all interrupted by any Acts of disobedience, but that if it happen that our Obedience be at any time notably interrupted by Acts of wilful, presumptuous Sin; it is indispensably necessary to our Salvation, that we renew our Faith and Repentance, and return to our Obedience again; and that we dye in Faith and Obedience to the revealed Will of God: As for them who are called at the last Hour, who are first converted and justified a little before their Death, Actual Faith and Repentance is required of them in their own Persons, and in much more sincere Obedience as they have time and strength to perform. As we see in the penitent Thief, he performed a great deal of Obedience in a little time, he not only believed in Christ with his Heart, but confessed him with his Mouth, pleaded for him, and vindicated him from the blasphemous Aspersions that were cast upon him. He likewise took shame to himself, and gave Glory to God, by confessing his own Sins; and withal he expressed his Love to his Fellow-Thief by rebuking and admonishing him. Lastly, He trusted in, and prayed unto Christ, as a Lord and King, who had a Kingdome in another World, and who could help and save him after this Life, Luke 22. 40, 41, 42. This that penitent Malefactor did at his Death, and truly this was a great deal for him to do at such a time, and when Christ, his Lord and Saviour, was before his Face in so low and miserable a Condition to the Eye of Sense and Reason. The Obedience which that poor penitent Believer, yielded to the Lord in such Circumstances, may well be esteemed equivalent to all that sincere Obedience which in the space of many Years, others in better Circumstances perform unto the Lord. Of this we have at large prosecuted and cleared this Argument for the indispensable necessity of sincere Obedience to the obtaining of Eternal Life and Salvation; and consequently for the Conditionality of the Covenant promise of Eternal Life and Salvation. And the Argument seems to us so clear and cogent, that we do not see any thing of weight that can be objected against it. If any should say, that sincere, Evangelical Obedience, is not only necessary to Salvation, as the condition to be performed on our parts, but upon other accounts also: We heartily acknowledge

ledge that it is so; It is necessary to express our Love and Thankfulness to God and Christ for their wonderful Goodness and Grace, Mercy and Love to us: As also it is necessary in order to the pleasing, and Glorifying our God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier; and that thereby we may profit and edify our Neighbours: But this doth by no means hinder its being likewise indispensably necessary to our own Salvation, nay all this is a part of that Obedience which is so necessary to our Salvation. If yet any should further object, and say, that besides Faith, sincere Obedience may be indispensably necessary to Salvation, and yet not be a Condition of obtaining Salvation. We answer, that we do not love to contend with any about the use of the word *condition*, if they will grant us the thing signified by the Word. Now by the Word *condition* in this matter of Obedience, we mean no more, but that sincere Obedience is so necessary to Salvation, that God by his Promise hath suspended our obtaining of Salvation, (consummate Salvation in Heavenly Glory,) till we have performed sincere Obedience unto him, assuring us that if through Grace we perform sincere Obedience unto him, we shall certainly be saved, but if not, we shall not be saved. This is all we mean by sincere Obedience its being the Condition of the Covenant-promise of Salvation. If our Brethren agree to this, they yield us the thing that we contend for; and there remains no more difference as to this matter; but about the use of the word *condition*; and if they do not think fit to use that Word, we leave them to their Liberty, not to use it, as we desire they would leave us to our Liberty to use it, as we have occasion. For though the Word be not in Scripture, yet the thing signified by the Word, is manifestly these, as we have proved. It is also a Word of Antient usage in the Christian Church, even in the best Reformed Churches, before ever we were born; why then should we forbear the use of the Word [ *condition*, ] or why should any be offended at our using of it? Indeed we cannot forbear the using of it, for the Reason given us by some well-meaning Men, because it is not a Scriptural-word: For if that Reason prove any thing it will prove too much, to wit, that we should not use the Words, *Trinity*, *Incarnation*, *Satisfaction*, *Merit of Christ*, *Sacrament*, *Infant-baptism*, &c. and which is more, that we should wholly give over Preaching the Gospel, and hereafter only Read the Holy Scripture, without Expounding it, for we are sure, that no Man doeth, or can, Preach one Sermon without using some Word, or Words, that are not expressly in the Scripture. And as our sincere Obedience may be, and really is a Condition of obtaining Eternal Salvation, though it be not expressly called by that Name in Scripture; so may it be, and really it is a Condition, though it be performed by the help of God's Grace. We know this is the main Reason why our Brethren think that neither our Faith, nor Obedience, can be a Condition of the Covenant, because they are wrought in us by the special, and effectual Grace of God; but we know also that this is a very weak Reason. For,

(1.) We do not say that that is the Condition of the Covenant which is the Work and Effect of God's Grace alone. Such is effectual Calling on God's part, and the infusion of the Seminal abiding principle of supernatural Spiritual Life. It is God only who calls us effectually, and who infuses the said Principle of Grace and Life into our Souls, and we are merely passive in the reception of it. We never said nor thought that it is required of us by way of Duty or Condition that we should effectually call our selves, and infuse a supernatural Principle of Grace and Life into our selves. This indeed would be very absurd; Therefore we hold that our being effectually called, and our having an abiding principle of Grace and Life given in unto us, is, *quid pre-requisitum*, something pre-requisite to our right performing the condition, but not the condition it self. That which is required of us by way of Duty and Condition on which God promitteth us the subsequent blessings of the Covenant, It is that we do not resist his Spirit, and that by the grace of his Spirit we do actually believe and obey, and persevere to the end. Now the Grace of God whereby we believe and obey, is so far from hindring our actual Faith, and Obedience from being the Condition, that on the contrary it conduceth very much to make them the Condition,



Condition, the Gracious Evangelical Condition of the Covenant, and without it they could not be such a Condition. As to what they say that special Grace necessarily causeth our Faith and Obedience, we answered before that special Grace doth not cause our actual Faith and Obedience with any such kind of necessity as is inconsistent with, or destructive of the true liberty of our Souls in believing and obeying. *Augustin* the great attester of the necessity and efficacy of Supernatural Grace against the Pelagians and Semipelagians, says in his 46 Epist. to Valentinus, *Obedientiam nostram (Deum) requirit, quæ nulla potest esse sine libero arbitrio.* God requires our Obedience, which without the liberty of our minds can be no obedience. And our own Westminster Confession of Faith in chap. 19. art. 7. says that the Spirit of Christ subdues and enables the will of man to do that freely, and cheerfully, which the will of God revealed in the Law requireth to be done. Dr. Twisse also saith frequently that the effectual will and grace of God doth not destroy, but establisheth the freedom of our actions, particularly in his Answer to Hoard, his *God's Love to Mankind*, Book 2. page 103. He writes thus against Mr. Mason, when once God hath planted in us a principle of new Life, of the Life of Grace, by the Spirit of Regeneration, though all the powers thereof do incline only to that which is good, like as the powers of natural corruption, incline only unto evil; yet the particular use and exercise of those is always free: Like as the particular use and exercise of the powers of our Corruption is always free to the committing of this or that sin according unto the emergent occasions standing in congruity to every mans particular disposition. And pag. 104. Should be (Mr. Mason) have laid to our charge that we maintain that God necessitates the will to any good act, and to over-rule the will therein, we should utterly deny it without distinction. It is true, he over-rules the will of the flesh, but not the will of the spirit, the Regenerate part, but moves it agreeably to its nature, and to work not only voluntarily, but freely whatsoever it worketh. For albeit the Regenerate part is like a moral virtue (though as much transcendent to it, as a thing supernatural transcends a thing natural) inclining only to that which is good, yet is it always moved to this particular good rather than to another most freely: Like as a mans natural Corruption inclines a man only to evil; yet to this kind of evil, or to this particular evil, rather than to that, Man is moved most freely: So that if we maintain not that God works a Man to every good act, otherwise than freely; let the very conscience of our Enemies judge, whether we can maintain that God necessitates the will either of Men or Devils unto sin. And in the next page 105, he brings for confirmation of what he had said, the 11th. Article of the Church in Ireland, where this position is first laid down, that God from all Eternity did by his Unchangeable Counsel ordain whatsoever in time should come to pass; and then it is forthwith added, "That hereby no violence is offered to the Wills of the reasonable Creatures, and neither the liberty nor the contingency of second Causes is taken away, but established rather. Then again in page 108. This is clearly our Doctrine (to wit, that when God never so effectually works any Creature to the producing of an act connatural to it, yet he works the Creature thereunto agreeably to its Nature, that is, if it be a necessary agent, moves it to work necessarily; if it be a contingent agent, moves it to work contingently, and if it be a free agent, moves it to work freely) and in effect it is the Doctrine of all them who say that God determineth the Will, as the Dominicans; or that God necessitates the Will as Bradwardin. For they acknowledge hereby that God moves the Creatures to work freely, in such sort, "That in the very act of working they might do otherwise, if they would. They confess this providence of God is a great mystery, and not sufficiently comprehensible by humane reason. Cajetan professeth thus much as before alledged, and Alvarez maintaineth it in a set disputation. Thus far Twiss, whereby we see that he held all the good we do, to be acts of free Obedience, notwithstanding that we produce them by the assistance of Gods effectual Grace, yea, that they are so free that though secundum quid in some respect it is necessary for them to be produced; yet simpliciter & absolute, simply and absolutely it is possible for them not to be produced.

See 127 page of his  
Defence of the Synod  
of Dort, &c.

See page 116, 117,  
118, 119, 120.

ced. And if our Actual Faith and Obedience be free acts of ours (notwithstanding that they are also effects of God's Grace,) then they may be our Duties also: And indeed they are Duties so necessarily required of us, as that the obtaining of Justification and Glorification is suspended by the promises till the performance of them as was proved before: And then it follows by necessary consequence that they are Evangelical Conditions of the promises; because they have the Essential Nature of an Evangelical Condition.

Here we take notice by the way that there are some who distinguish between the Covenant of Grace, and the administration of it, and they say themselves, and would make all others say with them, that the Covenant it self is absolute to the Elect; but that the administration of it is conditional in the preaching of the

\* A brief Account of Gospel. \* Now we must declare that we cannot say without the State of the differences now depending Grace is absolute to the Elect. We have already said and proved and agitated about that the Covenant of Grace made with the Church through Justification, page 4. Christ, is a complex of many promises, whereof some are indeed

absolute (yet not so absolute neither as to exclude all use of means;) such are the promises of the first Grace, of saving Faith and Repentance, &c. but others of them are conditional even to the Elect, such are the promises of the subsequent blessings of the Covenant; as of Justification, pardon of sin, and Eternal Life. We do not find that those subsequent blessings of the Covenant are ever promised to any of Adams Posterity, but upon some Condition expressed or implied; and most frequently the Conditions are expressed with a plain Declaration that as many as perform the conditions, shall have the promised blessings, but they who never perform the conditions, shall never have the promised blessings. This shows plainly that the Covenant it self is conditional in respect of the said subsequent blessings, because it promiseth them conditionally and not otherwise: And that which we see, is granted to us, that the administration of the Covenant of Grace is conditional, because it is preached to all, (Elect and non-Elect) Conditionally; Affords us an irrefragable Argument to prove that it hath Conditions, and is conditional. For if the Covenant had no Condition at all with respect to the Elect, how could we administer and preach it conditionally with respect to them? If the Covenant which we administer and preach to the Elect were absolute to them, so as to have no Condition; and if yet notwithstanding that, we should preach and administer the Covenant to them conditionally; our Administration and Preaching would not agree with the Nature of the object and thing which we Administer and Preach, and so it would be fallacious and deceitful. The Covenant hath no Condition but is absolute to the Elect, and yet must we tell them from the Lord that they must perform the condition of the Covenant-promise by believing and repenting; and then they shall have the promised benefit of Justification and Pardon of sin, but not otherwise? Would not this be to dishonour God and Abuse his People both at once? To dishonour God by taking his Name in vain, and preaching falsehood in his Name, and to Abuse his People by making them believe that the Covenant hath a Condition, and that they must perform it; otherwise they cannot be justified and saved, when at the same time we do not believe this our selves which we tell the People, but are persuaded in our own minds that the Covenant is wholly absolute to the Elect, and hath no condition at all. Either then as was said before, we must not Administer and Preach any part of the Covenant conditionally to the Elect, or there is and must be a Condition in the Covenant; and if there be a Condition in the Covenant, then we have what we aim at, for we desire no more to prove the Covenant of Grace to be conditional, and that it is not wholly absolute to the Elect. The Truth is here so clearly on our side that we think our Brethren should give Glory to God; and receive his Truth, without any farther wrangling opposition. As for the Author with whom we have to do, though he several times expressly denies Faith to be the condition of Justification, as page 8, 9, 25. Yet in page 24, where he affirms the

the Covenant to be absolute, he grants that the offer of Christ, and of all his fulness hath a Condition annexed to it, that the Condition is acceptance of the Offer; and that acceptance is a native Condition. Here we have,

1. An offer of Christ, and of all his fulness, which must of necessity include Justification; for that is a part of Christ's fulness, Eph. i. 11. Col. ii. 14. Rom. vi. 19. 1 Cor. ii. 9. Gal. iii. 12. &c.

2. This offer of Christ is an absolute offer, which yet hath the Condition of acceptance annexed to it. His meaning must be, that the offer of Christ, and his fulness, is so absolute as to have no other Condition, but yet not so absolute as not to have this one Condition of acceptance; for if this be not his meaning, it is contradictory Non-sense. For an offer that is absolute, without any Condition at all, and an offer that hath a certain Condition, implies a manifest contradiction. And indeed his Words are that it is an absolute offer that hath no Condition in it here. Well then, it is granted that the Gospel offer of Christ, and of all his fulness, hath one Condition, but so it is that that Gospel offer includes an offer of Justification, and therefore the Gospel offer of Justification hath a Condition; and since the offer of Justification can be nothing but the Promise of Justification, held forth to the Soul by the Ministry of the Word, it follows necessarily, that the Promise of Justification hath a Condition. And consequently, that the Covenant of Grace is partly conditional, it is conditional in it doth promise Justification upon a Condition.

3. The Condition is Acceptance; that is, it is Faith; for we cannot imagine what else but Faith, he can mean by Acceptance. For surely he doth not mean any meer natural Act of the Soul; but rather some gracious, supernatural Act, and what that should be but Faith, we cannot devise. We must therefore take it for certain, that by Acceptance he means Faith; and our Faith in Christ is our acceptance of him and his fulness. So then Faith being our Acceptance of Christ, and of all his fulness, which includes our Justification; and our Acceptance (by his own Confession) being the Condition of the Offer, it follows by necessary consequence, that Faith is the Condition of the Offer, but the Offer is the Covenant promise of Christ, and Justification through him, therefore the Covenant promise of Christ, and Justification is conditional; and an accepting, or receiving Faith is the Condition of it. Thus he contradicts himself, by affirming what he had denied before, and doth immediately deny, again in the very next 25th. Page.

4. This Acceptance, or Faith, this accepting Faith is (he says) the native Condition of the Offer of Christ, and of all his fulness, and so of Justification. What he means by native Condition needs an Explication; for it is capable of a double meaning.

(1.) It may signify that an accepting Faith hath a natural aptitude and fitness to be the Condition of the Offer, or Promise, of Christ and his fulness.

(2.) That of its own Nature, it necessarily is the Condition, and could not possibly be otherwise; so that its being the Condition ariseth wholly and necessarily from its own Nature, and not at all from the Will of God, constituting and ordaining it to that Office of being the Condition of the Offer or Promise. Now if he mean, that it is a native Condition in the first sense, we agree with him, for we know and acknowledge, that Faith hath a natural aptitude and fitness to be the Condition of the Offer or Promise of Christ, because Faith, in the very Nature of it, is an acceptance of Christ as he is offered in the Gospel; and we conceive this might be a Reason wherefore God made choice of Faith to be the Condition of the Offer and Promise of Christ, and Justification through him.

But if our Author mean, that Faith is the native Condition of the Offer or Promise, in the second sense, we must dissent from him. For though the natural aptitude, and fitness of Faith might be a Reason why God ordained it to be the Condition of the Promise, yet it was not a necessitating Reason, which so obliged God to make it the Condition of the Promise, that he could not possibly do otherwise. This we thus demonstrate;

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1. Whatsoever dependeth upon the *Free-will*, and *Sovereign Pleasure* of Almighty God, he might have done, or not have done, he might have done this way, or another way, if it had pleased him. This Proposition is self-evident, for it is of the very Essence of *Free-will* in God, the First and Freest Agent, that in all external temporal things, which fall under his *Free-will*, he might have done them, or not have done them, he might have done them thus as he doth them, or he might have done them otherwise than he hath done, if he had pleased. But antecedently to his free Purpose and Decree, the whole ordering of the Covenant of Grace, and of its terms, and receptive Condition, depended upon God's *Free-will*, and *Sovereign Pleasure*. Hence the Gospel is called the Mystery of God's Will, and the Revelation of the Gospel unto us, is said to be the making known unto us the Mystery of his Will, according to his Good Pleasure which he hath purposed in himself, Eph. 1. p. Now if the whole Mystery of the Covenant of Grace depended on God's *Free-will*, then the ordaining of this, or that, to be the receptive Condition of the Covenant, depended on his Will also, and so antecedently to the free Purpose of his Will, there was no natural necessity that Faith alone, and no other thing, should be the receptive Condition of the Covenant.

2. It is not yet past Dispute amongst Divines, Whether antecedently to God's free Purpose, and Decree to save us, by the Satisfaction and Merits of Christ alone, he might not have freely purposed and decreed to have pardoned and saved us some other way. Amongst our Reformed Divines, Calvin, Twiss, and Rutherford, and others, were of this Opinion, yea even Dr. Owen himself was once of this Opinion, (though afterwards he changed his mind in that, as he did in other things,) witness what he wrote in his Book called, *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ*: Or, *A Treatise of Redemption*, &c. Book II. Chap. II. Page 57. The Foundation of this whole Assertion seems to me to be false and erroneous; viz, that God could not have Mercy on Mankind, unless satisfaction were made by his Son: It is true indeed, supposing the Decree, Purpose, and Constitution of God, that so it should be, that so he would manifest his Glory by the way of vindictive Justice, it was impossible that it should otherwise be, for with the Lord, there is neither change, nor shadow of turning, Lam. 3. 18. 1 Sam. 15. 29. But to assert positively, that absolutely and antecedently to his Constitution, he could not have done it; is to me an unwritten Tradition, the Scripture affirming no such thing, neither can it be gathered from thence in any good consequence, if any one shall deny this, we will try what the Lord will enable us to say unto it, and in the mean time rest contented in that of Augustin, though other ways of saving us were not wanting to his Infinite Wisdom, yet certainly the way which he did proceed in, was the most convenient, because we find he proceeded therein. Thus Dr. Owen in that Book; and though he unsaid this again, and embraced that Opinion, which he then called an *unwritten Tradition*; yet there are other Learned Divines of that same Opinion at this Day. Mistake us not, for we do not say, that we are of it, but that some are, and that the matter is not yet past dispute. And the Consequence which we infer is undeniable, that if God antecedently to his Constitution and Decree could have pardoned and saved us some other way, without the Satisfaction and Merits of Christ, then surely he could have offered and promised us Pardon and Salvation, without the Condition of Faith in Christ, and upon what other Condition he pleased.

3. Though we grant, that upon supposition, that God would pardon our Sins, and save our Souls, it did not consist with the Glory of his Justice, and Honour of his Law, and Government to do it, without Satisfaction for the Offence we had given, and the Dishonour we had done him by our Sins; and therefore it was necessary not only from the free purpose of God's Will, but also from the nature of his vindictive governing Justice, that Christ, by suffering in our stead, should satisfy his Justice for our Sins, yet doth it not follow at all, by any natural necessity arising immediately from the essential nature of Faith without any appointment and constitution of God's Will, that Faith, because it is of a receptive nature, and nothing else, shall be the Condition upon the performance whereof, Christ with his Satisfaction and Merits shall be

not only offered, but given unto us. For as Dr. Owen saith very well, in his little *Book of the Trinity and Consolation of Christ*, pag. 202: The satisfaction made for Sin, being not made by the Sinner himself, there must of necessity be a Rule, Order, and Law-constitution, how the Sinner may come to be interested in it, and made Partaker of it; for the consequent of the freedom of one by the suffering of another, is not natural, or necessary, but must proceed, and arise from a Law-constitution, Compact, and Agreement. Now the way constituted and appointed, is that of Faith, or believing, as explained in the Scripture. Thus Dr. Owen. To which we add, that the Scripture explains it thus, *Gal. 3. 6.* That in Christ Jesus neither Circumcision, nor uncircumcision, availeth anything, but Faith which worketh by Love. From this Passage of Dr. Owen, and the Argument contained in it, it is most evident that it doth not arise immediately and necessarily from the receptive nature of Faith, that it is the Condition of the Offer and Promise, but from the Will of God, constituting and appointing it to be the Condition. Faith's receptive apprehensive nature is but a remote Reason of its Conditionality, and doth but make it fit to be the Condition, if God please to make it so: And it is God's Will and Law-constitution only, which is the nearest and formal Reason of its Conditionality, and which doth immediately and formally make it to be the Condition of the Covenant, *Jah. 6. 40.* This is no new notion of ours, we find it long agoe before many of us were born, *Valart, Doctor and Professor of Divinity in Leyden, in his Eucharistion Religionis Reformatae*, pag. 112. said that *Fides non Justificat, sed relative considerata, quia hac est Voluntas Dei: ut qui credit in Christum, ejus meriti fiat Particeps: Faith Justifies us, but relatively considered, because this is the Will of God, that he who believes in Christ shall be made Partaker of his Merit.* And not only Mr. Baxter, but *Cowwright* also, pag. 179. of his Book against Baxter, agrees with him in acknowledging this Truth; his Words are these, *(The Reason why Christ's Righteousness cannot Justify, except it be apprehended by Faith, is this, That God doth require Faith of us; Faith, I say, apprehending Christ, and his Righteousness, (believe in the Lord Jesus Christ) that so we may be Justified. Gods Will is properly the cause, yet there is a congruity in the thing it self, an aptitude (you grant) in the nature of Faith: It is of an apprehensive nature, and its apprehending Christ's Righteousness (the Will of God still presupposed) doth make this Righteousness ours; even as a Gift becomes ours by our receiving of it.)*

These Worthy Divines, we see, were of our Opinion, That it is not the nature of Faith it self, nor its relation unto Christ, which is essential to it, that doth formally make it to be the Instrumental Means, or Condition of our Justification, but it is the Will of God ordaining it to that Office. It is true, they held, and we with them hold, that there is a congruity and fitness in Faith to be the receptive, and applicative Condition of the Promise, and of Christ and his Righteousness therein, because it is of a receptive applicative nature, yet that doth not formally make it the Condition: For notwithstanding its fitness to be the Condition, yet it would never have actually and formally been the Condition of Justification, nor would it ever have availed unto Justification, if God by word of his freely will, had not made it the Condition of Justification. Is not Justification a great Blessing and Benefit, which is in the power, and at the disposal of God and Christ; and may not God do what he will with his own, may not he give his Blessing and Benefit upon what Terms and Conditions he and his Son shall think fit to agree upon? This surely is so evident, that no reasonable Man can have reason to deny it. And then the consequence is as evident, that it is not anything intrinsecal to Faith, and so not its relation to Christ, which is intrinsecal to it, that can nearly and formally make it the Instrumental Means, or Condition of Justification, but it is, and must be the Will of God, and his Son Christ Jesus, agreeing that Faith shall be, and ordaining Faith to be the Instrumental Means, Terms, and Condition of our Justification.

For these Reasons we dissent, and all Men that love the Truth should dissent from our Author, if by saying that an accepting Faith is the active Condition of the Offer of Christ, and of all hisfulness, he mean, That Faith of its own nature necessarily, is the Condition:





part with your Disease? Sin is your Misery; and can you be happy, if not part with your misery? Happiness consists in the enjoyment of God; but adhering to sin, and the enjoyment of a Holy God are utterly inconsistent: And can you be happy without happiness, or by retaining that which is inconsistent with it? So that you see there is an utter impossibility that Salvation should be had but upon these terms: There is an inconsistency, a plain contradiction, in any other supposition: It is an impossibility not only to us, but to the Almighty; and therefore the terms are as free and gracious, as possibly could be; Omnipotent Grace it self could not make them more gracious; thus Mr. Clarkson. Now let any Body of common understanding and honesty read and consider this passage, and they will plainly see that he speaks here of Repentance, and of Repentance not only as it denotes a Holy fruitful Life, and is the condition of consummate Salvation and Glorification; but also as it denotes the Souls first turning from sin and returning to God, and is the disposing, preparing Condition of our first obtaining the Pardon of our Sins, and Justification and Reconciliation of our Persons. And in both respects he holds Repentance to be a Condition indispensably necessary not only from the free Constitution and Ordination of God, but also from the very nature of the thing, so that God himself cannot dispense with it. Now if this Doctrine of Mr. Clarkson's be true and good, then let the World judge whether that Doctrine be not false and pernicious, which our Authour delivers in the 30 page of his Letter, That a real Change and Repentance is not antecedently necessary to Justification and Pardon of sin. This indeed we affirm to be necessary, and he finds fault with us for it, and makes it to be a part of our New Scheme of Divinity, into which he foists sincere Obedience, as if that also were a part of our new Scheme, That sincere Obedience is antecedently necessary to Justification. But this is his calumny that we hold sincere Obedience distinct from Faith and Repentance, to be antecedently necessary to Justification; all that know us and our Doctrine, know this to be false, and the contrary to be true, that in our Judgment sincere Obedience is not necessary before, but after our Justification, and before our Glorification. As for a real Change, and Repentance we do indeed believe and preach that they are necessary, indispensably necessary in order of Nature at least before our Justification and pardon of sin; for a real change is wrought in us by effectual calling, and that is certainly before Justification, Rom. 8. 30. And Repentance is the dispositive condition of Justification and the means to be used by us for obtaining the pardon of our sins, which is an essential part of Justification. But so it is that the condition is in order of Nature before the thing conditionate, or the thing promised upon condition, as also the means is in execution before the end, therefore Repentance which is the Condition and Means is in order of Nature before Justification, which is the thing conditionate and the end. This we proved before both by Scripture and Reason; and so doth Mr. Clarkson prove it in the passage we have now quoted, by two pertinent Scriptures, Prov. 28. 13. He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whose confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy; and Isa. 55. 7. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and unto our God, for he will abundantly pardon. Surely one would guess by this, that Mr. Clarkson in his time was one of the Masters in our Israel, with whom our Authour finds fault, page 15, of his Letter, for saying to a Man who asks them; What he must do to be saved, that he must repent and mourn for his known sins; and leave and loath them, and God will have mercy on him; And most certainly if ever there were any such Masters in our Israel, Mr. Clarkson was one of them, for according to his Principles he must in that case have given a Man that answer, for he strongly asserts that God Almighty cannot have Mercy upon, and pardon a wicked Man, unless he repent, mourn for his known sins, leave and loath them.

But it would seem our *Author* is such a *Crafts-Master*, that he can teach a wicked Man how to obtain the Mercy of God in the pardon of his sins before, and without repenting of, mourning for, leaving, and loathing of them; for he blames us for telling a wicked Man who comes to us for advice what he must do to be saved, that he must repent, mourn for, and turn from his sins, and God will have mercy on him, and pardon him; now if this be bad Advice, then it plainly follows, that if the same wicked Man go to our *Author*, and if he can give him better advice, he must show him a way to obtain God's mercy in pardoning his sins and saving his Soul; before, and without his repenting of, mourning for, and turning from his sins. But how can our *Author* effect this, how can he teach a wicked Man to be saved from Sin and Wrath without Repentance? Why he pretends this is easily done by giving the Man that same advice, which *Paul* and *Silas* in *Acts* 16. 30, 31. gave unto the Goaler, when he asked them what he should do to be saved? And they said to him, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house. This he says is an old Answer, so old, that with many it seems to be out of date, page 14. and it is the right Answer: For says he, page 15, Why should not the right Answer be given, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved. By this it is evident that he sets these two Answers in opposition the one to the other, as inconsistent, and makes, (Repent, and God will have mercy on you) to be the wrong Answer: And, (Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved) to be the right Answer. And now is not he a wise Master in our *Israel* who talks thus? If he had only talked thus to his silly Profelytes in a private corner, though we had been credibly informed of it, we should not have easily believed it, or if the evidence had been such, as we could not choose but believe it, yet we should not have wondered so much at the matter; but that he should appear in print with such stuff, that he should appear on the Theatre of the World in the face of the Sun, and tell a knowing wise People that a wicked man who asks Ministers what he must do to be saved, must not be taught to repent of his sins, but to believe in Christ that he may be saved, (as if these two things were inconsistent, the one being right, and the other wrong), It cannot but move us to admiration of his strange confidence, to an indignation at his gross ignorance, or vile hypocrisy; and to a tender compassion towards those poor Souls whose lot it is to be led into the Ditch by such blind guides. But good Sir, how doth it appear that our answer is wrong and yours only is right? Why may not both be right, and why must not both be right, and both concur to make up one entire answer, and full advice to a wicked man who under Conviction comes and asks Ministers, what he must do to be saved? If you had behaved your self in this matter like a fair adversary or an honest Man, you had given in our answer fully without curtailing it; for you know in your conscience that in such a case our full Answer and Advice to a Man is, that he must do both, he must both believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and repent of, mourn for and turn from his sins. The Conscience of Truth extorted this Confession from you in your appendix, page 41. as we observed before. That your hottest opposers would freely tell such a man that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. Why did not you then (if you be an honest man) give in our full answer, and refuse it, if you thought it was wrong? If you say that *Paul* did not give such a full answer and advice to the Goaler, *Acts* 16. 30, 31. but bid him believe only in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thereupon promised him Salvation, without advising him to repent and turn from his sins. We answer, It is true, *Paul* bid the Goaler believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; but it is utterly false that he bid him only believe, there is no such exclusive particle in the Text, and though the Sacred Historian *Luke* mention not expressly that *Paul* bid the Goaler repent, yet it doth by no means follow that, because *Luke* doth not say expressly that *Paul* bid the Goaler repent, therefore he did not bid him, for it was never *Lukes* intention to set down in his History every Word or Sentence which *Paul* at any time spoke to the People. Nay

in the very next verse, *Acts* 16. 32. *Luke* says that *Paul*, and *Silas* spake unto the *Goalers* the Word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house; but he doth not tell us particularly what that Word was: Nor doth our *Author* know, nor can he with a good Conscience say that it was not an Advice and Exhortation to repent, to mourn for his known sins, and to leave and loath them, assuring him that thereupon God would have mercy on him, and pardon his sins, and save his Soul for the Lord *Jesus Christ's* sake. If our *Author* say that as he cannot be sure of the negative that he did not, so we cannot be sure of the affirmative that he did preach the necessity of Repentance to the *Goalers*. We answer that we can prove, and do thus prove the affirmative.

(1.) Because it was a part of the Apostles Commission to preach Repentance unto all People, as well as Faith in Christ; for which see *Mark* 16. 15, 16. compared with *Luke* 24. 47, 48. But *Paul* was an Apostle, therefore he acted according to the Apostolical Commission.

(2.) Because *Paul* baptized or caused the *Goalers* to be baptized, and it was necessary that Repentance should be preached to him, and professed by him, before such an one, as he, were admitted to Baptisme.

(3.) Because *Paul* himself tells us (as his words are recorded by the *Sacred Historian Luke*) that it was his common Practice to preach Repentance, as well as Faith unto all those whom he Converted, or intended and endeavoured to convert unto the Christian Religion. Thus did he at *Lysra*, *Acts* 14. 15. He exhorted the people to turn from their Vanities unto the living God which made Heaven and Earth, &c.

Thus also at *Athens*, *Acts* 17. 30, 31. He commanded them all from the Lord to repent, and perswaded them so to do, by a most powerful Motive and Argument taken from God's being Rector and Judge of the World, and from his having appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness by *Jesus Christ*, and will then justify or condemn, reward, or punish every man according to their works, and this he assured them of by an Argument taken from Christ's Resurrection from the dead. Again in *Acts* 20. 21, he tells us, That Repentance towards God and Faith towards our Lord *Jesus*, were the sum and substance of his Sermons; these were the two subjects that he ordinarily preached upon both to *Jews* and *Gentiles*. And lastly in *Acts* 26. 20, 22, 23, we read, that he declared openly to King *Agrippa*, that from the first time he was miraculously called to be an Apostle, his business had been to preach Repentance and Faith. From all which we conclude that we have good reason to believe and assert the affirmative that *Paul* did not preach Faith only, but that he preached Repentance also to the *Goalers*; and withal we challenge and desir our *Author* to prove the Negative, that *Paul* preached not the necessity of Repentance, but of Faith only in order to his Salvation.

But saith our *Author*, page 13. No wit or art of man will ever find a crack or flaw in, or devise another, or a better answer than *Paul's* to the *Goalers*, believe in the Lord *Jesus*, and thou shalt be saved. We Reply, It is far from the thoughts of any of us, or of any good Christian to find fault with, or to go about to mend *Paul's* Answer to the *Goalers* question, all that we say is that his whole answer is not set down expressly by the *Historian Luke*, and we have proved it. A truer Answer cannot indeed be given than it was, but a fuller may be given, and we have proved it was given by *Paul*, though not particularly expressed by *Luke*. This may satisfy any reasonable Man, for we are sure it cannot be confuted. Yet for the farther satisfaction of all Men (if possible), we will here transcribe and set down a passage of Mr. *Veining*, a famous Congregational Minister once in this City. It is in his Sermon called the way to true happiness preached before the Lord Mayor and Aldermen January 28. 1653, on *Matth.* 7. 21. page 10, 11, 12. I ground it further (saith he) on this Rule which is an undeniable one, and for not attending whereunto, we

have had so many needless, groundless, and unprofitable disputes in the World. The Rule is this; That the Scripture doth often, yea, very usually put particular Duties for all Religion, and therefore annexeth Salvation to distinct Graces. Sometimes it is, he that believeth, shall be saved; Elsewhere he that calleth upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved: Here it is, He that doth the will of God. Now all these and the like are complex and comprehensive propositions, and contain more in them than they make shew of (for God speaks much in a little,) Alls and Duties of Religion being (as Moralists speak of their Virtues, inter se connexæ) linked together in a Golden Chain. Religion is not this or that piece, but the whole, which is usually expressed in a word, or sometimes two, as in Alls 20. 20, 21, 27. compared, the Apostle comprehends the whole counsel of God under Repentance and Faith; also in that of Solomon, Fear God and keep his Commandments, for this is the whole of Man, Ecclesi. 12. 13. So that if you could suppose a Man to be a Believer, and to be a Believer alone, it would not save him, as the Apostle James saith, chap. 2. 14. What doth it profit my Brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works, can faith save him? No, no more than saying, be ye warmed, will warm any; or be ye filled, will fill any; for Faith without works is dead. And what is said of this, may be said of the rest, so that when the Scripture speaks of Salvation, as annexed to any one thing, it supposeth that to contain the rest: The reason is evident, for the Graces of God, as saving, are not parted. There is no believing to Salvation without Repentance, nor no Repentance to Salvation without believing; there is no calling upon the Name of the Lord will save, without departing from iniquity; nor can they savingly depart from iniquity, that call not on the Name of the Lord. It is not any one thing, but things that pertain to the Kingdom of God, Alls 1. 3. It is not thing but things that accompany, (or as it may be better read, contain) Salvation, Heb. 6. 9. And he that takes one for all without all, (as our wise Authour doth,) will find nothing at all. A part is no portion. "The great fallacy with which Satan deludes many men, is that which Logicians call *à bene compositis ad malè divisa*; When he gets them to take Religion into pieces, and then take one piece for Religion. One cries up God, another cries up Christ, another Faith, another Love, another good Works; but what is God without Christ, or Christ without Faith, or Faith without Love, or Love without Works? But now take God in Christ, by Faith which worketh by Love to the keeping of the Commandments of God, and this is pure Religion. It is the whole, that is the whole of Man.

Yet again, though I have spoken thus much to it, let me make it clearer than a demonstration, That one is put for all, and as containing all, by comparing these places of Scripture; In 1 Cor. 7. 19. You read that circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the Commandments of God? What's that? Why that is all in all. In Gal. 5. 6. It is neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but Faith which worketh by Love: That's that which availeth, or is all in all. Yet in Gal. 6. 15. he saith, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new Creature: That's all in all. And yet for all this, as if all this were nothing, he tells us, in Col. 3. 11. That Christ is all and in all, cashiering both circumcision and uncircumcision, as formerly. Now, my beloved, if you should take any one of these, though each be said to be availing, I say if you should take any one, and lay the stress of your Salvation upon it; you were undone. (Let our Authour and his Profelytes look to themselves.) It is not keeping the Commandments of God, nor Faith working by Love, nor the new Creature, no nor Christ himself considered alone and apart that availeth any thing, but these in conjunction. He names one onely, because where one is, it is not only one, there is more than one; wherever one is savingly, there are all in their respective places, in far as they are to be in relation to Salvation. Thus you see, that Faith as well as Works, and Works as well as Faith (every one in their own order) are to be taken in, or we shall not be taken into the Kingdom of Heaven.



*This Rule of interpreting Scripture is one of Vennings things that are well worth the thinking on, and therefore we have set it down at large. If it be duly attended to, it will give light sufficient to discover the darkness of our Authors Ignorance or Hypocrisy.*

But he objects further, That no answer but this, alone, can rightly heal the wound of an awakened Conscience, pag. 15. We reply, That what he says is false and delusive in his sense, taking Faith for one single all of one Grace and Duty exclusive of Repentance, and all other Graces and Duties: But take it according to God's usual way of speaking much in a little, and in a complex comprehensive sense, as taking in, or not excluding, but rather supposing Repentance, and it is most true: For the Virtue and Efficacy of Christ's Blood applied by the Spirit and Faith to the Soul prepared by Repentance, is indeed the only Remedy that can heal it. But if our Author will say that Faith in Christ alone and without Repentance will heal the wounds of awakened consciences in wicked Men at their first Conversion; we cannot choose but rank him amongst those Covetous, deceitful Prophets and Priests, who heal the hurt of the People slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace. *Jerem. 6. 13, 14.*

We are infallibly sure from the Scriptures of Truth, That the Apostles Commission was to preach Repentance as well as Faith in order to Mens Justification and Salvation; and that they were obedient to the Commands of their Great and Glorious Lord, and preached according to their Commission. For we read in God's Holy Word, that when the Consciences of a multitude of unbelieving Jews, (who had been accessory to the most barbarous murder of Christ the Son of God and Saviour of Men) were thoroughly awakened, and their Spirits were deeply wounded by the Arrows of Conviction which Almighty God by his Word and Spirit had shot into their Souls, they feeling themselves pricked in their hearts, said unto Peter, and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and Brethren what shall we do? *Acts 2. 37.* then as follows, *vers. 38.* Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, &c.

Here we have a Company of People in great distress of Conscience, as the Goaler was; and in this their Spiritual distress, they do as the Goaler did. As the Goaler sought advice of Paul and Silas, and asked them, what he should do to be saved; just so the awakened convinced Jews sought advice of Peter, and the rest of the Apostles, and asked them, What they should do; To whom Peter answered, Repent and be baptized, &c. Whereupon we demand of our Author, was this answer of Peter, a right answer or not?

(1.) We hope he will not, he dare not say it was not a right answer; For Peter was an Apostle as well as Paul; and at that very time he was full of the Holy Ghost, and spoke as he was inspired by the Holy Ghost: If then he should be so bold as to say, that Peter did not give them a right answer, because he did not say to them, as Paul said to the Goaler, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, he would not only give Peter, but the Holy Ghost the lie; and might justly expect that the Lord would confound him. Therefore we do not think that he will be so impious as to say, that Peter did not give the Men a right Answer.

(2.) If he say that it was a right Answer, which Peter gave them, then in effect he gives himself the lie, he condemns himself, and justifies us. For it is the same Answer upon the matter which we give unto the Sinner that comes to us for advice, which Peter gave unto the convinced Jews. Peter bid them repent and be baptized, &c. We bid him, repent of, mourn for, and turn from his Sins, and God will have Mercy on him for Christ's sake, and if the man be unbaptized as the Jews were; we bid him be baptized for the remission of sins, as Peter did by those Jews. Whatever therefore our Author hath said against us in this matter, he hath said against Peter, and which is more, against the Holy Spirit himself. If our Answer be wrong, then Peter's was wrong before us, and he it was that deceived us, for we have ours from him, and from God by him. If

If *Peter's Answer* was right, then *ours is* right likewise, for ours is the same with his exactly, if the Person be unbaptized, excepting that upon his Repentance, and Baptism for the remission of sins, we do not promise him the miraculous, extraordinary Gift of the Holy Ghost, as *Peter* promised those Jews, but only the ordinary Gift which is common to all true penitent Believers, in all Ages. If our *Author* say, that *implicitly* *Peter* bid them believe in Christ, as well as repent, by bidding them to be baptized in his Name. Most true; and so do we; nay which is more, whether the Person be baptized, or unbaptized, when we exhort him to repent, we never fail to exhort him also; and that explicitly, and in formal express terms, to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; as *Paul* did by the Jaitour. Where is the Fault then of our Answer taken fully and fairly as we give it? Certainly no where, unless *Peter* and *Paul's* Answers were both faulty, for our Answer comprehends both theirs, and is exactly the same, so far as the different Circumstances of the Persons and Times will admit. Let our Author then look to it, that by his writing thus against us, he be not found fighting against God, and the Holy Apostles of Christ our Saviour's blood.

By what hath been said we have made it sufficiently evident, that the Covenant of Grace is not absolute, but conditional, with respect to its subsequent Blessing and Benefits; for we have proved it, both by clear Scripture and Reason. We have shewed also, that our Author's own Conscience could not altogether deny it, and therefore he grants, that an accepting Faith is the native Condition of it: How far, and in what sense this is true, we have shewed at large, and withal, we have proved, that though Faith be the one native, receptive, applicative Condition of Justification, yet it is not the only Condition absolutely; but the only receptive Condition, with which it is very well consistent, that Repentance be the dispositive Condition, which it really is, and that as naturally, and necessarily, in its kind and order, as Faith can be in its kind and order.

It remains now, that having proved the Covenants Conditionality by Scripture and Reason, we shew in the third and last place, by Testimonies of Divines, Antient and Modern, even of those very Divines whom our Author affirms to be against us, that they believed the Covenant to be conditional in the same sense as we do, and consequently, that our Author has foully belied us in telling the People, that we have invented a new Divinity, corrupt the old, and preach a new Gospel. And,

1. We shall begin with the Antient Doctors of the Christian Church, and give a few Testimonies of theirs relating to the Matter in hand, even as many as can well consist with our designed Brevity.

2. We shall come to the Testimony of Orthodox Divines since the Reformation.

1. We begin with the Fathers, and among them, Blessed Clement deserves the first place, because he was the Antientest of them, he was contemporary with the Apostles, St. Paul speaking of him in *Phil. 4.* gave him this honourable Testimony, that his Name was in the Book of Life. Of this Blessed Pastour of Christ's Church, we have the first Epistle to the Church of Corinth, which is by all acknowledged to be genuine, and which was so much esteemed in the Primitive Church, that it was read publicly in their Congregations. Now in the Oxford Edition, 1677. pag. 17. he writes thus, *Αντιδομας εις το αιμα το γενομενον, οτι δουλος εις τον τιμον το δουλοειπον αυτος, οτι η δια τον υπερβολον καρδιας εμεγαλην, ημεν το δουλο υπερβολον αυτου εμεγαλην. Αντιδομας εις το αιμα το γενομενον, οτι δουλος εις τον τιμον το δουλοειπον αυτος, οτι η δια τον υπερβολον καρδιας εμεγαλην, ημεν το δουλο υπερβολον αυτου εμεγαλην.* &c. Let us with fixed eyes behold the Blood of Christ, and consider how precious his Blood is unto God, which being shed for our Salvation, hath offered the Grace of Repentance to the whole World. Let us earnestly take a view of all Generations, and learn that in every Generation the Lord hath given place of Repentance to such as were willing to turn unto him.

This Testimony of Clement, with what follows there, shews plainly, that God hath



for our Salvation, God hath offered the *Grace of Repentance to the whole World*, Clement meant, that God hath admitted all Men to Repentance, as the way and means to obtain Pardon, and hath promised, and according to his Promise doth give them Pardon, for Christ's sake, upon their Repentance.

But it may be, some will Object, that yet the same Clement, in the same First Epistle to the *Corinthians* saith, pag. 67. *They (the Holy Men before, and under the Law) were all Glorified and made Great, not by themselves, nor by their own Works; or by the just Actions which they did, but by his Will.* So we (Christians) then, being called in Christ Jesus by his Will, are not justified by our selves, nor by our own wisdom, or knowledge, or piety, or by the works which we have done in holiness of heart; but by Faith, whereby the Almighty God hath justified all Men from the beginning of the World, to whom be Glory for ever and ever, Amen. We Answer, that this makes nothing against us, for we have believed we do, and through Grace, will always believe, that God Justifies us by Faith, and not by any Works distinct from Faith, in the sense before explained; that is, that God, of his own Gracious Will and Pleasure, hath ordained Faith to be the only receptive, applicative Condition, Means, or federal, moral Instrument of Justification, upon our performing of which Condition, or using of which Means and Instrument, God doth freely justify us for the sake of Christ's satisfactory, meritorious Righteousness only. We do indeed with Clement, and with the Holy Prophets and Apostles believe, that sincere Repentance is pre-required, as a *dispositive Condition* to our obtaining of Justification; yet we do not say any more than they did, that we are Justified by Repentance; but together with them we say, that we are Justified by Faith only, because God hath appointed Faith only to that Office of being the receptive Condition, and inward, applicative Means of Justification through Christ's Blood: Clement's saying, that God Justifies us by Faith, and not by Works, must undoubtedly be understood in this sense, as appears by what we have quoted, and shall now further quote out of him. Pag. 102. *Ἐξέλθωμεν ἐκ τῶν ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ, &c.* Let us speedily remove this evil from among us, and let us fall down before the Lord, humbly beseeching him with Tears, that being become favourable, he would be reconciled unto us. By this Passage we see, that Clement held, as we do, that repenting of, mourning for, and turning from our known sins, and humble earnest Prayer to God, through Christ, is a means indispensably necessary to be used by us, before we can have ground to hope that God will have mercy on us, in pardoning our sins.

And as he held Faith and Repentance together to be indispensably necessary to the obtaining of Justification, and pardon of sin, so he held sincere Obedience, in a course of holy living, to be indispensably necessary to the obtaining of Glorification and Eternal Salvation. For thus he writes, pag. 61, 62. *πάρων ἐν βλαπτομένῳ καὶ ἀκαρτέρῳ, πολεμῶντι αὐτῷ καὶ ἀποκτείνοντι, &c.* Since therefore all things are both seen, and heard, by him, let us fear him, and forsake all foul desires of evil Actions, that so we may be protected, by his Mercy, from those Judgments which are to come. For whither can any one of us flee from his powerful Hand? And what World will entertain any of them, who fall off from him, or turn Renegado's? — Let us come unto him therefore in the holiness of our Souls, lifting up unto him pure and undefiled hands, loving this our gentle and merciful Father, who hath made us unto himself, the portion of his election. And pag. 73. *Ἡμεῖς ἐν ἐπαγγελίᾳ διεδόξαμεν, &c.* Let us therefore earnestly strive to be found in the number of them that wait on him, that so we may be made Partakers of those Gifts which are promised. But, Beloved, how shall this be done? If our Thoughts be steadfastly fixed upon God by Faith; if we enquire after those things which are well-pleasing, and acceptable unto him; if we do those things which are agreeable to his pure, and irrevocable will; and follow the way of Truth: Casting away from us all injustice and iniquity, covetousness, contentious, malignities and deceits, whisperings and backbitings, hatred of God, pride and boasting, vain-glory and ambition, for they that do these things are abominable unto God, and not only the Doors thereof, but they also which consent thereto. For the Scripture saith, &c. As in Psalm 50. which Clement quotes from v. 16. to the end.

end. And then he proceeds, saying: (*This is the way, Beloved, wherein we find Jesus Christ, our saving health, the High Priest of our Offerings, the Guardian and Helper of our weakness.*)

Lastly, in Page 102, 103, 106. *He that hath Love in Christ, let him keep the Commandments of Christ, &c.* — Blessed are we, Beloved, if we have done the Commandments of God, in the Concord of Love; *ὡς καὶ ἀποδοῦναι ἑαυτοῖς καὶ ἀμαρτίας ἡμῶν, that through Love our Sins may be forgiven us: Facit is written, Blessed are they whose Iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.* Blessed is the Man unto whom the Lord imputeth not sin, neither is there guile in his mouth. This Blessedness hath been unto those who were chosen by God through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be Glory for ever and ever. Amen. Thus Clement; who was Paul's Fellow-Labourer, (Phil. 4. 3.) and who may well be presumed to know his Mind, as to these Matters; and we see evidently by his Words, that he held (as we do) that Faith and Repentance are both antecedently necessary to Justification and pardon of sin, and further, that sincere Obedience to Christ's Commandments, in a course of holy living, is indispensably necessary to the obtaining of Eternal Life and Glory in the Everlasting Kingdom of our most Glorious God and Saviour. But some may possibly say, what did Clement mean by writing as he doth, that our sins are forgiven us through Love? Is that an Orthodox Expression? We Answer, What did our Saviour mean by saying, Mat. 6. 14, 15. *If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.* And again, what did our Saviour mean by saying, Mark 11. 25. *When ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in Heaven, may forgive you your trespasses.* Were these Orthodox Expressions? If they were Orthodox, as doubtless they were, and it were Blasphemy to think otherwise; then so is the expression of Clement Orthodox, for the Expressions are alike upon the matter, and the meaning is the same. Clement by saying, that our sins are forgiven through Love, meant no more, but that our forgiving our Neighbour his Trespasses against us, (which is an Act of Love;) is a Means of God's appointment, whereby we obtain the forgiveness of our sins from God through Christ. We do not doubt, but this was Clement's meaning; and we are sure it was our Saviours: When he said, Mark 11. 25. *If ye have ought against any forgive, that your Father also, which is in Heaven, may forgive you.* Our blessed Lord, who is the faithful Witness, makes God's forgiving us to be the End; and our forgiving our Neighbour to be a Means indispensably necessary to be used by us for obtaining that End. So that we obtain the forgiveness of our sins through Love, in a very sound and Orthodox sense; even as sound and Orthodox as Christ's Gospel is.

In the second place we bring the foresaid Testimony of Origen to prove, that the real change which is wrought in the Soul by a sincere Repentance, is antecedently necessary to dispose and prepare us for obtaining the promised Blessing of Pardon of sin, which is an essential part of Justification. It is in his Third Book against Celsus, of the Cambridge Edition, pag. 154. The Passage in Origen begins thus, *Μακάριον τὸν δὲ ἑαυτοῦ λαμβάνει τὸ καὶ διδόνον. ὡς καὶ λαμβάνειν πειράσκειται, τὰς αὐτοῦ πταισμάτων παραδοῦναι, ὡς ἀγαθὸς τῆς δικτῆς διακονίας.* Which we will give the sense of, in English, for the use of our Author. After these things (*viz.* which had been objected and answered before) be (Celsus) takes upon him to charge us with that which is not granted by the more-rational, judicious Believers, though perhaps it may be thought so, by some foolish, or ignorant Christians, that as some Men are overcome by, and under the Dominion of a tender, compassionate, natural frame and temper of Mind, so God being overcome by, and under the power of a merciful, compassionate nature towards them that are in misery, he relieves and pardons miserable Men, though they be wicked, if withal they be of a pitiful merciful



merciful nature. But though they be otherwise good men, yet God rejects them, if they be not of such a pitiful, compassionate Nature: Which is most unjust. For according to our Faith God doth not relieve, so as to pardon and receive into his Favour any wicked Man, unless he be first turned unto virtue, (that is, converted;) like as he doth not reject any, that is not become a good Man. But neither doth he relieve, or show mercy unto any Man of a merciful Nature, merely because he is of a merciful Nature, saving the world (Mercy) in the sense that the vulgar, or common People, use it in; but those that greatly condemn themselves for their sins, so as thereupon to mourn and bewail themselves in lust and undue by reason of the evil they have done; and wilful give evidence of a signal change, such as becomes true Penitents, God grants to them (a *παρακατα* *χρημα*) the Grace of Repentance, (that is, the Gracious Fruit and Benefit promised to Repentance,) even to them who have changed their most wicked course. For unto such is given (as by *Αβλ*) a pardon of their past sins, through the virtue that comes to dwell in their Souls, and casts out the vice and corruption that possessed them before. Or, if at first they attain not unto a confirmed habit of virtue, yet there is a notable change in the Soul, which proceeds so far, as that it is sufficient, according to the proportion of it, to purge out, and take away the great abundance of wickedness that was in it before; so, as it can hardly ever get into the Soul again. Thus far Origen. In which Testimony of his there are several things worthy of our observation.

1. Origen did not write this merely as a private Christian, or Teacher of the Church, declaring what was his own private Opinion, but as the great, and famous *Απολογιστ* in his time for Christ, the Christian Church, and for the Truth of the Christian Religion, against the *ἑτεροδοξ*, particularly against *Κελσι*, a very learned Heathen, who had written learnedly and spitefully against Christ, and against Christians, and the Christian Religion.

2. Whereas *Κελσι* had charged Christians with an absurd, impious Opinion, as that they believed, That God pardoneth wicked Mens sins, and receives them into his Favour, if they be of a good Nature, of a soft, pitiful, compassionate Temper; before there pass a real change upon them; before they repent, before they turn from sin, and return unto God in Heart and Affection; Origen denied the Charge, and affirmed, that no rational, intelligent, judicious Christian believed any such thing; that if any Christian did at all believe, that God justified and pardoned a wicked Man before he had repented of his sins, and returned unto the Lord, they must be some foolish, simple, ignorant People; and yet he would not absolutely grant to his Adversary, that there were then any such foolish, ignorant Christians in the World; but in regard he was not acquainted with every individual Christian, he did not absolutely deny it, only he said, *ἴσως*, perhaps there might be some such Christians in the World: And if there were (as there might be, or not be some, for ought he knew,) they were none of the right breed of Christians, they were but *ἀνθρώποι* foolish, ignorant Christians.

3. Origen acknowledges that that senseless Opinion did impute unto the Holy God, a thing that is (*ἀδυσχεπές*) most unjust.

4. Therefore in the Name of the Christian Church he declares to *Κελσι*, That Christians believed, that God pardons, and receives into Favour no unconverted, impenitent Man, and that he rejects no good Man, no penitent Believer.

5. He declares, that according to the Faith of Christians, a Man must always repent, before God pardon him, and receive him into his Favour.

6. That the Repentance, which goes before Pardon, and to which pardon is promised, must be such as makes a real change in a Man's Heart and Soul, and that the change is so great, as that the Man greatly condemns himself on the account of his sins, he mourns for them, and turns from them unto the Lord in Heart and Affection, yea it is so great, as that the reigning power of sin is in a good measure broken, and it is cast down from its Throne in the Heart.



there is a means and condition of God's own appointing upon the act and performance wherof we are received again into favour with the Lord.

And after the middle of the same Book, *desertum dilectionem Ephesii imputat, &c.* The Lord imputes unto the Ephesians, that they had left their first Love, he upbraids them of Thyatira with Fornication, and eating of things sacrificed to Idols; He accuses them of Sardis, that their works were not perfect before God; he reproves them of Pergamum for teaching perverse Doctrine; he rebukes the Laodiceans for trusting that they were rich and needed nothing. And yet he admonishes them all to repent with threatenings indeed; but he would not threaten to punish the impenitent; if he were not willing to pardon the penitent; (And saith, if any doubt of this, for the removing of such doubts) *illum etiam minimus patrem non taleto, qui prodigum filium reuocat, &c.* I will not forbear to mention that most meek Father (in the parable) who calls back his Prodigal Son, and after his poverty and distress, gladly receives him upon his Repentance, kills the fattest Calf, adorns his Joy with a Feast, and why not? For he had found his Son, whom he had lost, and he had felt his love to be the greater towards him, because he had regained him. Now whom must we understand by this Father? Why even God; for none is so much a Father as he, none so affectionate as he; Therefore he shall receive thee his Son, although thou hast prodigally spent, that which thou hadst received from him, although thou returnest naked, yet he will receive thee, because thou art returned: And he will rejoice more in thy return, than in another mans sobriety; *Sed si penitent ex animo*, but it is on condition that thou repent from thy heart, that thou remove thy tangle-shaped condition with the plenty of thy Fathers hired Servants; that thou forsake the swine, those unclean beasts, that thou come back to thy Father, though he be offended with thee; saying, Father, I have sinned, nor am I worthy to be now called thine.

By this we plainly see, that Tertullian preached the necessity of sincere Repentance antecedently to the obtaining pardon of sin.

Next to Tertullian we alledge blessed Cyprian for a Witness of the same Truth. Thus then he writes, *Domine loquar, &c. Operum Cypri. Tom. 1. Epist. 182. edit. Colon. Acrip. An. 1617.*

The Lord speaketh and saith, to whom shall I look, but to him that is humble and still, and trembleth at my words: Seeing we ought to be all such, they then much more ought to be such, whose Duty it is to endeavour that after a grievous fall they may obtain God's favour and mercy by true Repentance and great humility.

In his 52 Epistle to Antoninus, page 59. Dominus in Evangelio, &c. The Lord in the Gospel setting forth the goodness and kind affection of God the Father, saith, What man is there of you, who if his Son ask of him bread, will give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish will give him a Serpent? If ye then who are evil, know how to give good gifts unto your Children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give good things to them that ask him? The Lord here makes a comparison between a Carnal Father, or a Father of the Flesh, and the Eternal and large goodness and kindness of God the Father: Now if it be so that our evil sinful Father upon Earth, who hath been grievously offended by his sinful and wicked Son, yet if afterwards he see him reformed, and having forsaken the sins of his former Life, and being by the sorrow of Repentance amended and changed to sober and good manners, and to the Discipline of Innocency (or to a Holy course of Life,) he both rejoyleth and is glad, and having received him whom he formerly had cast off, he embraces him with the desire of a Fatherly Joy: How much more doth that One and True Father, who is Good, Merciful, and Kind, yet Goodness, Mercy, and Kindness it self, rejoice in the Repentance of his Children, neither doth he threaten wrath to the penitent, nor punishment to them that mourn and lament: But he rather promisseth them pardon and favour? Whence the Lord in the Gospel saith, They are blessed who mourn, for he that mourns moves compassion; Whereas he that is stubborn and proud, heaps up to himself the wrath and punishment of the judgment to come.

And

And for the same Epistle, pag. 65. *Schismatica Diabolum Baptizatum silent*  
*ad hoc & irritant ipse Deus. Ob id agendum peritiam peccantes redit & veniam*  
*atque indulgentiam peccatoribus in datur.* We know according to the Faith of the  
 Holy Scriptures, God himself being both the Author and Exhorter, that Sinners  
 are brought to Repentance, and also that forgiveness and favour is not denied  
 them when they do repent. And in this eighth Epistle to the Clergy and People, after he had told them  
 that according as it had been revealed and foretold by prophecy, the Enemy  
 had got power over them, and had raised a terrible Persecution against them,  
 because of their Divisions and Contentions, their breaking the Lords Command-  
 ments, and sleepy way off Prayer; and after he had most passionately exhor-  
 ted them to give themselves much to Watching and prayer, to earnest, fre-  
 quent, fervent Prayer Night and Day, and had pressed them thereunto both  
 by precept and example of Christ and his Apostles, who spent Days and Nights  
 in Prayer, and had likewise encouraged them thereunto by telling them that  
 Christ prayed not for himself and his own sins, but for them and for their  
 sins, he added us it in pag. 16. of that Book: *Quod si pro nobis, etc. id est*  
*quod si pro nobis, etc. id est* (the Lord Jesus) labours, and watches, and prays for  
 us and for the pardon of our sins, how much the more should we continue in Prayer  
 and Supplication? We have Jesus Christ our Lord and God, to be Advocate  
 and Intercessor for our Sins, if so be, (or on condition) that we repent of our sins  
 past, and confessing and being sensible of our Faults, whereby we now at this present  
 time offend the Lord, we promise that for time to come we will walk in his way,  
 and fear his Commandments.

By this that we have cited, and by much more that we could cite out of  
 Cyprian, it may evidently appear, that that blessed Martyr of Jesus, was far from  
 being of Opinion that God pardons the sins of his People before they repent.  
 Indeed to tell People that God pardons their sins before they repent, it is *falsa*  
*miseriordia*, false or deceitful Mercy, it is not *carere, sed si dicere verum vo-*  
*luntur* occidere, the way to cure but (if we will speak the Truth) to kill Souls,  
 in the Judgment of those Ancient Elders and Deacons, who wrote the 21<sup>st</sup>  
 Epistle to Cyprian, pag. 37. and Cyprian himself was of the same Judgment.  
 For thus he writes in the same Book, pag. 14. *Qui peccantem audit, audit et*  
*Deo.* That is, He who of others a sinner must first be, and glorieth in De lazar Tom. 2.  
 words, gives him occasion to sin, and doth not restrain but nourish his  
 his sinful lusts. Whereon he who at once both reproves and instructs his brother by giving  
 him more solid and firm counsel, he helps him forward in the way to Salvation. Whom I  
 love (with the Lord) I rebuke and chasten. So the Minister of God ought not to deceive  
 the People by cunning and confusing compliances, but to provide sound and saving Remed-  
 ies for their Souls. He is ignorant, unskillful Chirurgion, who is afraid to feel with his  
 hand the swelling is hollows of wounds, and whilst he keeps the corrupt humour close shut  
 up in the sacred vessels of the bowels, he increases it, and makes the wound more danger-  
 ous. The wound must be opened, and incisions must be made, and the Malady must be cured  
 with a stronger, and sharper Remedy, even by cutting off, and taking away the  
 flesh that is corrupted and putrified. Let the sick Person cry out and complain as he  
 will, by reason of the pain which he hath not patience to endure, yet afterwards he  
 will thank the Chirurgion, when he finds that he is cured.

Thus Cyprian, and sure this is sufficient to shew that he would never have said  
 that it is better counsel to tell an awakened Sinner that he must repent of his  
 known sins, known for them, leave and loath them. Cyprian was more loving  
 and faithful to the Souls of Men than so to betray them to the Enemy of their  
 Salvation; he would have lost his Life before he would have done it. And  
 indeed he did at last lose his Life for his faithfulness to Christ, and to the  
 Souls.





God may render unto him. *Eternal Life*, according to his works. But because we have even good works themselves from that God, from whom we have Faith and Love, therefore the same teacher of the Gentiles, both called *Eternal Life*, is self, Grace of God. And in the next and 4th Chapter he saith, That Paul in Ephes. 2. 8, 9. Having written that we are saved by Grace through Faith, and that none of our selves, it is the effect of Gods loving-kindness, which he hath bestowed upon us, that men might think that Faith alone was sufficient to them; And saith that man may be proud of their good works, as if they were able of themselves to do them, therefore he immediately added, for we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which he hath prepared that we should walk in them. Audi &c. intellige, non ex operibus dictum, tanquam tuis ex teipso tibi essentibus, sed ex etiam etiam (saith Austin) It is said not of works, as if they were thine own, which thou hast of and from thy self; for thou art created in Christ Jesus unto them.

We have also large Confession of Faith of Fifteen Pastors of the Church of Carthage in Africa, concerning the Incarnation, Fulgent de Decretis, and Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. It was indeed written by 15 Gra. & Cl. one of them, to wit, the Famous Fulgentius, but all their Names are prefixed to it, and it is by them directed to Petrus Diaconus. In the 17th Chapter of that Book they write thus, The Savior of the world, &c.

Our Saviour himself with the commanding power of his own voice speaks unto the will of man, saying, repent and believe the Gospel, yet it is clear a man receives from God Repentance unto Life, that he may begin to believe in God, so that he cannot believe in God until he hath received Repentance by the gift of God who sheweth Mercy. But what is a Mans Repentance, but the change of his Will? Therefore God who gives a Man Repentance, doth himself change Mans Will. Now observe here,

(1.) That in the judgment of the fore-said Fifteen Fathers, the Lord both Commands and gives Repentance unto Life.

(2.) That the Lord gives Repentance before we believe in God, because he gives us Repentance that we may begin to believe in God.

(3.) That we cannot believe in God at all, unless God first give us Repentance, which must be understood in this sense, that we cannot believe at all with the Faith of *fiducial consent* and *recumbency* unless it be first given us to repent, for it is self-evident that we can and do believe with the Faith of *assent*, before we do repent, and indeed we neither do, nor can repent till we first believe with the Faith of *assent*, as was shewed before. And it is clear from their own words that they meant not, that we cannot believe with the Faith of *assent*, but that we cannot believe with the Faith of *consent* and *fiducial recumbency*, unless it be first given us to repent. Their words are, A Man receives from God Repentance unto Life, (ut in Deum credere incipiat) that he may begin to believe in God. Now by believing in God undoubtedly they meant believing in him, so as to *consent* to have him for our God, and so as to *trust* him as our God. And could not mean only believing so far as to *assent*, that there is a God, and that his word is true: For they were the Disciples of Holy Austin, and had learned of him to distinguish between (*credere Deum, credere Deo, & credere in Deum*) believing a God, and believing that all God saith is true, and believing in God so as to love him and take him for our God, and trust him as our God. It is this believing in God which they say cannot be begun till we have first repented through Grace, and this is a great Truth, as was shewed before out of Carwa. And since this believing with *fiducial consent* and *recumbency* is justifying Faith, it follows evidently that those Fifteen Fathers held Repentance to be before Remission of Sins, and before Justification, as it consists in Remission

of Sins; because they held it to be before Justifying Faith, whereby we receive Remission of sins, *Act. 10. 43.*

(4.) We observe they say that *Repentance* is a change of our Will, and God himself by giving us *Repentance*, changes our Wills. Therefore in the Judgment of those Fifteen Fathers there is and must be a real change in us, before we be justified and pardoned. And we must let our Authour know that these Fathers which are for us against him, were burning and shining Lights in their day. Most of them (if not all) suffered banishment for the true Faith of Christ, under the persecution of the Arian Vandals in Africa. For we have a Synodical Epistle of theirs concerning the Grace of God, and the will of man which was written by them in their Exile in Sardinia, to which, Twelve of their Names are prefixed, the self-same names which are prefixed to the foresaid confession of Faith concerning the Incarnation and Grace of our Lord Jesus directed to Petrus Diaconus and his Brethren who were come from the Eastern Churches, to receive information concerning the Faith of the Western Churches. We will here cite one short passage out of the Synodical Epistle of those Twelve banished Pastors of Christ's Church. It is in the 10th. Chapter. *Quod autem vos dicitis, &c.* As to what ye (who wrote to us) say that man is saved by the alone Mercy of God; but they say unless a man run and labour with his own will, he cannot be saved. We answer that both are truly held, if the right order be kept between the Mercy of God, and will of man; that Mercy go before, and the Will follow; that God's Mercy alone confer the beginning of Salvation; with which afterwards the Will of Man may cooperate towards its own Salvation; that God's Mercy preventing or going before, may direct the course of man's will, and that man's will obeying, through the same Mercy or Grace following it, may according to its intention run towards the (heavenly) prize. Here we see that it was the Judgment of those Twelve Confessors, That we are saved by the alone Mercy and Grace of God, if through Grace preventing and assisting us, we yield Obedience to the Lord, and run and labour to obtain the prize of Eternal Life and Glory. And that if we do not this, we cannot be saved. This is what we say that sincere Obedience is so indispensably necessary that without it we cannot be saved. It shall suffice at present to have demonstrated by the Testimonies aforesaid that we are no Innovators, no Preachers of a new Gospel, and Divinity in this matter, since we have Christ and his Apostles, and the Fathers of the best and purest Ages on our side, all giving in testimony for us, and against our Authour. It will not consist with our designed brevity to alledge more testimonies of the Doctors of the Primitive Church, and therefore we pass from them to the Modern Divines, the Doctors and Pastors of the Reformed Churches.

We begin with the *Augustan* Confession of Faith, and the Edition we make use

Testimonies of Modern Divines.

of, is that which was printed at Wittenbergh in the year 1540. In the 20th. Article concerning Faith, these are its words. *Primum igitur de fide & justificatione sic docent, Christum apte complexus est summam Evangelii, &c.* First therefore they (the Protestant Ministers and Churches) thus teach concerning Faith and Justification; Christ hath fully comprehended the Sum of the Gospel, when in the last Chapter of Luke he commands Repentance and Remission of sins to be preached in his Name. For the Gospel reproves sin, and requires Repentance, and at the same time offers Remission of sins freely for Christ's sake, and not for our own worthiness. And as the preaching of Repentance is universal, so also the promise of Grace is universal, and commands all to believe and receive the benefit of Christ, as Christ says, Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden. And Paul says, He is rich unto all that call upon him. Therefore though some Contrition and Repentance is necessary, yet we must believe that Remission of sins is given unto us, and that of unjust we are made just, that is, reconciled or this

accepted, and made the Children of God, freely for Christ's sake, and not for the worth or merits of contrition, or of other works that go before, or follow after. But this benefit is to be received by Faith, &c. — Therefore when we say that we are justified by Faith, we do not understand this, that we are just for the Dignity, Worth, or Merit of the Virtue of Faith itself. But this is the meaning, that we obtain the remission of sins and the imputation of Righteousness through Mercy for Christ's sake; but this Mercy cannot be received but by Faith; And here Faith signifies not merely the knowledge of the History, but it signifies to believe the promise of Mercy, which we obtain for Christ the Mediator: — For what can be more acceptable to an afflicted, trembling conscience, in its true sorrows and pains, than to hear, that this is the Command of God, this is the voice of Christ the Bridegroom, that they be surely persuaded that Remission of sins, or Reconciliation is given not for our worthiness, but freely through Mercy for Christ's sake, that the benefit may be certain. As for the word Justification in those passages of Paul, it signifies the Remission of sins, or Reconciliation, or imputation of Righteousness, that is, the acceptance of the Person. And in the same Article, the paragraph concerning good works. [This new life then, should be obedience towards God. And the Gospel preaches Repentance, nor can there be Faith, but in those who repent, because Faith comforts Mens hearts in contrition, and fears of sin, &c. Moreover we also teach concerning this Obedience, that they who commit mortal sins, (that is, wilful presumptuous sins against Knowledge and Conscience,) are not just, because God requires this obedience, that we resist our corrupt lusts and affections. But those who do not resist, but obey them against the Command of God, and do actions against their Conscience, they are unjust, and they neither retain the Holy Spirit nor Faith, that is, confidence of Mercy. For in those who delight in sin, and do not repent, there cannot indeed be that Trust or Confidence, which may seek for remission of sins. This passage of the *Augustan* Confession we thus understand, that habitual reigning, wilful sin against Conscience, and without Repentance is inconsistent with a State of Grace, and Reconciliation. And we think that all Protestants (except *Antinomians*) are agreed in this. One passage more, and we have done with this Confession of Faith. It is in the same 20th. Article of Faith, a little before the passage last quoted. There is no need here of dissuasions about predestination, and the like. For the promise is universal, and it takes nothing from works, yea it stirs up to Faith and to Works that are truly good. For remission of sins is transferred or removed from our Works (unto God's) Mercy, not that we may do nothing, but much rather, that we may know how our Obedience pleaseth God, in our so great infirmity.

This was the first Protestant Confession of Faith, written by *Melancthon*, Received by the Protestant Churches, subscribed by their Ministers, and that not only by *Luther*, and those of his Party, but even by *Calvin* also. It was likewise subscribed by seven Princes and Dukes in *Germany*, and by the Magistrates of Cities, and presented unto the Emperour *Charles V.* in the Year 1530. We hope then, it will not be denied, but that this *Augustan* Confession contains the true Doctrine of the Gospel in the points of Justification by Faith, and of the necessity of Repentance unto the obtaining pardon of sin; and of sincere Obedience unto the obtaining of Eternal Salvation. And if so, then our Doctrine in those points, is likewise the true Doctrine of the Gospel, for it is the same with that of the *Augustan* Confession, as to those Matters of which we treat.

From the *Augustan* Confession, and the Testimony of many Princes, Pastours, Cities, and Churches, who subscribed, and received it, we come to the Articles of the Church of *England*, which we have all subscribed, the 11th. Article concerning Justification we most heartily embrace, and acknowledge that it is a most wholesome Doctrine, and full of comfort, that we are justified by Faith only, in that sense which is more largely explained in the Homily of Justification, to which the Article expressly refers us, and which by consequence we have subscribed, by subscribing the

file. It is called a *Sermon of the Salvation of Mankind by Christ only*; and a very good Sermon it is, worth a thousand of our Authour's Letter, which deserves not to be mentioned the same Day with it. For understanding then the true and full meaning of the Article of Justification, we must have recourse to the Homily, or Sermon of Salvation. In which Excellent Sermon, pag. 13. London Edit. 1673. We read as followeth, [That though according to the Apostle, we are justified by a true and lively Faith only, and that that Faith is the Gift of God. [Yet that Faith doth not shut out Repentance, Hope, Love, Dread, and the Fear of God, to be joined with Faith in every Man that is justified, but it shutteth them out from the office of Justifying. So that although they be all present together (marke that, they do not onely necessarily follow, and flow from Faith in time, but when we are first Justified, they are present together with it,) in him that is Justified, yet they Justifie not altogether, nor the Faith also doth not shut out the Justice of our good Works, as necessary to be done afterwards, of Duty towards God (for we are most bounden to serve God, in doing good Deeds commanded by him, in his Holy Scripture, all the Days of our life,) but it includeth them, so that we may not do them to this intent, to be made good by doing them. For all the good Works that we can do, be imperfect, and therefore not able to deserve our Justification, &c. Again in the second part of that Sermon, pag. 15. Nevertheless your Sentence, that we be Justified by Faith only, is not so meant of them, that the said Justifying Faith is alone in Man, without true Repentance, Hope, Charity, Dread and Fear of God at any time and season. Nor when they say, that we be Justified freely, they mean not, that we should, or might afterwards be idle, and that nothing should be required on our parts afterwards. Neither they mean not, so to be justified without good Works, that we should do no good Works at all. But this saying, that we be justified by Faith only, freely, and without Works, is spoken for to take away clearly all Merit of our Works, as being unable to deserve our Justification at God's Hand, and thereby most plainly to express the weakness of Man, and the Goodness of God, the great Infirmity of our selves, and the Might and Power of God, the imperfectness of our own works, and the most abundant Grace of our Saviour Christ, and therefore wholly to ascribe the Merit and Deserving of our Justification unto Christ only, and his most precious Blood-shedding. This Faith the Holy Scripture teacheth us, this is the strong Rock and Foundation of Christian Religion, this Doctrine all Old and Antient Authors of Christ's Church do approve, this Doctrine advanceth, and setteth forth the true Glory of Christ, and beateth down the vain-glory of Man, this whosoever denieth is not be accounted for a Christian Man, nor for a better forth of Christ's Glory, but for an Adversary to Christ, and his Gospel, and for a better forth of Mens vain-glory. Again, pag. 16. The true meaning, and understanding of this Doctrine, we be justified freely by Faith without Works, or we be justified by Faith in Christ only, is not, that this our own All to believe in Christ, or this our Faith in Christ, which is within us, doth justify us, and deserve our Justification unto us, (for that were to count our selves to be justified by some All or Vertue, that is within our selves,) but the true understanding and meaning thereof is that, although we hear God's Word, and believe it, although we have Faith, Hope, Charity, Repentance, Dread and Fear of God within us, and do never so many Works thereunto: Yet we must renounce the Merit of all our said Vertues, of Faith, Hope, Charity, and all other Vertues, and good Deeds, which we either have, doe, shall do, or can do, as things that be far too weak and insufficient, to deserve remission of our sins, and our Justification; and therefore we must trust only in God's Mercy, and that Sacrifice which our High Priest and Saviour Christ Jesus the Son of God, once offered for us upon the Cross, to obtain thereby God's Grace, and Remission, as well of our Original Sin in Baptism, as of all Actual Sin committed by us after our Baptism, if we truly repent, and turn unfeignedly to him again. And at the end of the same 16. and beginning of 17. Page, You see, that the very true meaning of this Proposition, or Saying, we be justified by Faith in Christ only (according to the meaning of the Old, Antient Authors, &c.)

that is, We put our Faith in Christ, that we be justified by him only, that we be justified by God's free Mercy, and the Merits of our Saviour Christ only, and by no Works, or good Works of our own, that is in us, or that we can be able to have, or to do; for to deserve the same: Christ himself only being the Cause meritorious thereof. All this we most heartily approve of: But we doubt, whether our Author will join with us in it, because he says, the Papists own this, *That Christ only is the Meritorious Cause of our Justification.* And if it be so, then *Let. pag. 6.* according to his reckoning the Church of England and we, may be both Papists, in the point of Justification; notwithstanding that the said Homily was written purposely against the Papists, and we have all subscribed to it. It may be our Author has so accustomed himself to call Men *Papists*, when ever he is angry with them, that he cannot forbear it; and therefore as he used to call the Church of England Men *Papists*, so now being angry with us, his Passion may have excited him to bring his Habit into Act, and to speak us also among *Papists*, in the point of Justification. But we leave this, and proceed to what is more material; and that is, that if we be not justified by Works, because they do not, nor cannot merit Justification, then it will follow that for the same reason, we are not justified by Faith, because Faith can no more merit Justification, than Works. This Objection the Author, or Authors, of the Homily foresaw, and answered it, by confessing that Faith doth not justify us, on the account of its meritorious Nature, but on another account. Their Words are these, *As great and as goodly a Virtue, as the lively Faith is, yet it parteth us from it self, and ventereth or appointeth us unto Christ, for to have only by him remission of our sins, or Justification.* So that our Faith in Christ (as it were) Faith unto us thus, It is not that take away your sins, but it is Christ only, and to him only I send you for that purpose, for saving therein all your good virtues, Words, Thoughts, and Works, and only putting your trust in Christ.

And in the Third Part, Pag. 17. Nevertheless, because Faith doth directly send us to Christ for remission of our sins, and that by Faith given us of God, we embrace the Promise of God's Mercy, and of the remission of our sins, (which thing none other of our virtues or works properly doth,) therefore Scripture useth to say, that Faith without Works doth justify. Thus far that Excellent Sermon. And this is the same thing which we maintain, That God hath chosen Faith above all other Graces and Virtues, to be the receptive, applicative Condition, or moral Instrument and Means of Justification, because it hath a proper and peculiar aptitude and fitness for that use, being both of an illuminative and receptive Nature; and as it is of an illuminative Nature, it assures us, that we can be justified by no Satisfaction and Merit, but that of Christ, and so it sends us to him alone for Justification: Then as it is of a receptive Nature, it embraceth the Promise, and takes hold of him, and his Righteousness, as held forth to us in the Promise, that thereby, and for the Satisfaction and Merits thereof alone, and for no other thing, we may be justified. In this sense we hold, that we are justified by Faith only, and that Faith is the only receptive, applicative Condition of Justification. Yet this hinders not, but that Repentance is the dispositive Condition of Justification. The Homily saith expressly, that Faith doth not shut out Repentance, but that they are present together, and that by Faith we trust only in Gods mercy, and Christs Sacrifice, to obtain thereby Remission of all Sins, Original and Actual, if we truly repent, and turn unfeignedly to him again, Part 2. pag. 16. Which words manifestly shew, that they held Repentance to be a Condition of Justification; but it cannot be according to the Authors of the Homily, either a meritorious Condition, for there is none such at all possible; nor a receptive, applicative Condition, for that is the office of Faith only. Therefore it must be a dispositive Condition. And then when one is justified, it is evident, that they held sincere Obedience to be indispensably



speciably necessary to his continuing in a Justified state, and obtaining Eternal Salvation. For they say in Part 3. pag. 171. *that if after we are justified, and made Members of Christ, we care not how we live, whether we do good, or avoid evil Works, we make our selves Members of the Devils; and surely that is inconsistent with a Justified state: Therefore to prevent our becoming Members of the Devil again, sincere Obedience from a Principle of Faith and Love is indispensably necessary.* And that this was their true meaning is further evident from the Sermon of Good Works, Part I. pag. 29. Where they quote and approve the saying of *Chrysostom*, concerning the penitent Thief. The words are; [*This I will surely affirm, that Faith only saved him. If he had lived, and not regarded Faith, and the works thereof, he should have lost his Salvation again.*] Indeed this is but a Supposition, and we have no reason to think, that if he had lived longer he would not have been careful to lead a Life of Faith and Holy Obedience; yet if the antecedent be supposed, the consequent necessarily follows, that he would have lost his Salvation again. For as it is in the Sermon of Faith, [*To Second Part p. 24. show that have evil works, and lead their Life in disobedience, and transgression, in breaking of God's Commandments, without Repentance, perisheth not everlasting Life, but everlasting Death, as Christ himself saith, they that do evil shall go into everlasting fire, Mat. 25.*] These Passages do manifestly show, that in the judgment of the Church of England, as sincere Repentance is indispensably necessary to obtain forgiveness of sin, so sincere Obedience, from a principle of Faith and Love, and bringing forth Fruits meet for Repentance, is indispensably necessary to the escaping of eternal damnation; and obtaining of eternal Salvation. Let any Man read, and consider the Sermon of Repentance in the same Book, Tom. 2. pag. 324. and he will see this to be as clear as the Light at Noon-day. We will quote one short Passage out of it, in Page 339. they say, [*The filibiness of sin is such, that as long as we do abide in it, God cannot but detest and abhorre us, neither can there be any hope, that we shall enter into the Heavenly Jerusalem, except we be first made clean, and purged from it. But this will never be, unless forsaking our former Life, we do with our whole Heart return unto the Lord our God, and with a full purpose of Amendment of Life, flee unto his Mercy, taking sure hold thereupon, through Faith in the Blood of his Son Jesus Christ.*] This excellent Passage shews clearly, that as Faith is the receptive, applicative Condition, so true Repentance is the dispositive Condition of the Covenant of Pardon and Life, and that the one is as necessary in its kind, as the other is; and that unless through Grace we do both, we are undone for ever. Thus we have shewed at large what was the old Gospel Doctrine of the Church of England at the Reformation, and that our Doctrine is exactly the same. Therefore it must needs be a most horrid (we will not say lye, but) falsehood, that we preach a New Gospel, and that we are to be blamed for telling People that they must repent, and mourn for their known sins, leave and loath them, and God will have Mercy upon them for Christ's sake. From whole Societies of Protestants, we pass to the Testimonies of Individual Pastors of the Reformed Churches. And we begin with *Calvin*, who in his Commentary on Ezek. 18. 23. sayes, (*Deus erga non ita vult omnes salvos fieri, ut dissimulet omne dolus boni & mali; sed praeceps veniam poenitentia, quemadmodum hic dicitur.*) Therefore God doth not so will all Men to be saved, as to take away all difference between good and evil; but Repentance goes before Pardon, as it is here said, And again on the same Text, We hold therefore, that God doth not will now the death of a Sinner, because he calls all to Repentance, without making a difference, and promises that he shall be ready to receive them (*modo serio resipiscant*); if they (or on condition that they) earnestly repent. And in his Institution Lib. 3. cap. 3. Sect. 20. where he writes thus, *Quare ubi remissionem peccatorum offert*

offer. *Deus* etc. For which reason where God offers remission of sin, he likewise wishes to require an *act* of Repentance, signifying thereby that his Mercy offered, ought to cause Men to repent. *Deo* (saith he) Judgment and Justice, because Salvation is come into the world. (1st. 16. 18.) Likewise, The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and to them who turn from transgression in Jacob. (Isa. 59. 20.) Again, Seek the Lord, while he may be found, call upon him, while he is near, let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteousness of his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him. (Isa. 55. 6, 7.) Again, Be converted and repent, that your sins may be blotted out. (Acts 3. 19.) Where yet it is to be noted, that this Condition, (to wit of Repentance) is not so annexed (to those Promises,) as if our Repentance were the ground of meriting our pardon; but rather (because the Lord hath determined to show mercy unto Men for this end, that they might repent,) he sheweth them whither they are to go, (to wit unto God by Repentance,) if they will obtain Favour.

In these passages we observe,

(1.) That Calvin says expressly, That Repentance is a Condition annexed to the promise of pardon.

(2.) That the performance of that Condition goes before pardon; And,

(3.) That therefore we are to repent, and so perform the Condition, that we may obtain the Grace of pardon.

(4.) That in Calvin's Judgment Repentance is a Condition of Justification; and that because Calvin believed Justification and pardon of sin to be the same thing, as is most evident from what he writes against *Osiander*, *Instit.* 3d. Book, cap. 11. *Self.* 4. 21, 22.

(5.) That in Calvin's Judgment Repentance is the dispositive Condition of Justification. For it must be either the receptive or dispositive Condition; but it cannot be the receptive Condition, for in Calvin's judgment Faith is the only receptive Condition, therefore it must be the dispositive Condition. And indeed Calvin so held it to be, for in his third Book of Institutions, chap. 3. *Self.* 18. He says, *Privatim Deo confiteri, pars est verae poenitentiae quae omitti non potest. Nihil enim minus consentaneum quam ut peccata ignoret Deus, in quibus nobis ipsi blandimur, &c.* To confess our sins in secret to God, is a part of true Repentance, which cannot be omitted: For nothing is less becoming or suitable, than that God should forgive us those sins, in which we flatter or please our selves. On the contrary, Calvin writing against *Pighius*, says, (*Sane Contra Pigh. de lib. humiles Deus respicit, sicut illi acceptum cordis contriti & affligi arb. lib. 5. Self. Ad sacrificium David canit*) Indeed God hath regard unto the *dacts tamen* humble, as David sings in his Psalm, that the Sacrifice of a contrite and afflicted heart is acceptable and pleasing unto him. These passages show,

That in Calvin's judgment an impenitent sinner is, by reason of his impenitence unfit for pardon; but that the true Penitent by his Humiliation and brokenness of Heart is disposed and fitted for pardon, so that it is agreeable to the perfections of God's Nature to accept such a Person in Christ, and to pardon his sins for Christ's sake: And as Calvin held Faith and Repentance to be the Conditions of our Justification, so did he hold sincere Obedience from a Principle of Faith and Love, to be the Condition of our not falling from a justified state, and of our obtaining the possession of Eternal Life and Glory. For thus he writes in his Institutions, Quoties ergo audimus, &c. Therefore it often as we hear, that God bestows his benefits on them who keep his *lib. 2. cap. 17. Self. 6. Law*, we are to remember that God's Children are there designed or described by the Duty, which they ought to be continually exercised in; that we are for this reason adopted that we should reverence and honour him for our Father. (*Ne ergo ipsi adoptivis iure nos adicemus, hac semper entendendum, quo tendit nostra vocatio:*) Therefore least we should dedicate, diminish, or deprive our selves

of the right of Adoption, we must evermore be endeavouring to obtain the end of our (Christian and Heavenly) calling. By this passage we see that Calvin held sincere filial Obedience to be a Condition necessary on our part to our continuing in a state of Sonship, and to our obtaining the Heavenly Inheritance of Children. It is confessed, that he did not think, that the performance of such Obedience, and perseverance therein to the end, depends principally on Man's Will; nor do we think any such thing, nay we declare, that it depends principally on God's special Grace and Favour through Jesus Christ. He also did not think the said Obedience to be meritorious; nor do we, nay we utterly abhor any such Thought.

So that in this Matter Calvin and we do exactly agree against our Author: Calvin says, (*Dum operum fiduciam excludimus, hoc volumus duntaxat, ne mens Christiani ad operum meritum, velut ad salutis subsidium, reflectatur: Sed penitus resideat in gratia iustitie promissione:*) Whilst we exclude all trust or confidence in works, we mean this only, that the mind of a Christian should not look on the merit of good works, as unto an help towards the obtaining Salvation, but that it should wholly rest in the free Promise of Righteousness.) Here Calvin himself gives us a Key to open the true meaning of any Expressions of his, that may incline any body to think, that he slighted good Works of holy Obedience. And he would have us to know, that all such Persons, that think so of him, quite mistake his sense, for his true meaning is only, that good Works are not in the least meritorious, that under that false notion they are to be slighted indeed; and that true Christians should have no regard unto them, as if by their merit they could help us to obtain Salvation: now under this false Notion we reject them utterly, as much as our Author or any other Man can do. Yet can we never allow that good Works which are really such should be cryed down as unnecessary to Salvation in that way that the Lord hath made them necessary; much less can we agree to the horrid Opinion of the *Amsdorfsian* Lutherans, that good Works are pernicious to Salvation. So much for Calvin. Next to him it is fit that *Beza* should appear to give in his Testimony. And he gives it clearly on our side. For thus he writes in his 20th. Epistle, *Conjunctionem autem esse penitentiam, & remissionem peccatorum, &c.* That Repentance and Remission of sins are joyned together; and so indeed that Repentance goes before Remission of sins, partly the express Word of God teaches it, partly also Reason it self and common sense, how corrupt soever, shews it. John (says Mark in his 1. Chapter) preached the Baptisme of Repentance for Remission of sins. And Luke 13. Except (says Christ) ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. And Luke 24. 47. Repentance (saith Luke) and Remission of sins must be preached in his Name. Moreover nothing doth occur more frequently in the Scriptures than such Testimonies: For neither doth the Lord vouchsafe the Grace and Favour of Remission of sins unto others but them that are penitent. From this passage we observe,

(1.) That it is a Truth so bright and clear, that Repentance goes before pardon of sin, that in *Beza's* Judgment the common Sense and Reason of Mankind doth or may discern it.

(2.) That this Testimony can not be eluded and put off, by saying that it is a Legal; and not an Evangelical Repentance that goes before pardon of sin. For the proofs which *Beza* brings from Scripture, will by no means admit of this Evasion. For

(1.) The Repentance that (*Beza* saith) goes before pardon of sin, is the Repentance which Christ exhorted the Jews unto, Luke 13. 3. 5. and which he ordered his Apostles to preach unto all Nations in his Name, beginning at Jerusalem. But certainly that was an Evangelical, and not a meer legal Repentance.

(2.) The

(2.) The Repentance which in Beza's Judgment goes before pardon of sin, is a Repentance to which is made the promise of pardon of sin, so that whosoever doth not thus repent shall perish, but whosoever doth thus repent shall not perish. Therefore it is and must be an Evangelical, and cannot be a meer Legal Repentance, for pardon of sin is not promised to a meer Legal Repentance: And it cannot be truly said, that a Man who repents with a meer legal Repentance shall not perish. Thousands have perished Everlastingly, who yet repented with a meer legal Repentance. And *Julian* was one who so repented, *Matt. 27. 3. 4.* And when he had done so, he went and hanged himself. It is most evident then that Beza did not bring those Texts to prove that a meer legal Repentance goes before pardon of sin, for those Texts do not speak of a meer legal Repentance, but of one that is truly Evangelical, to which pardon of sin is so infallibly assured, that whosoever doth not so repent, shall perish, and whosoever doth so repent, shall not perish.

But *Rome* may say, yet Beza asserts in the same Epistle, that contrition of Heart doth not properly proceed from the Gospel. We Answer, it is true, he doth say so, but it is plain, he was mistaken in that, and contradicts *Galvin*, who says expressly, that (*Con. Joh. Evangelii*) *Inst. 1. 3. c. 3. summam breviter complecti volui*, *Item, &c.*) When the Lord Christ Sect. 19. would comprehend the whole sum of the Gospel in few words, he said that it behoved him to suffer, to rise again from the dead, and that Repentance and Remission of sin must be preached in his Name, and that the Apostles after his Resurrection preached, that he was raised up by God to give Repentance unto Israel, and Remission of sin. It may be, Beza had some peculiar conceits, that all Repentance, of what kind soever, is properly from the Law, and but improperly from the Gospel. It would seem so by his saying, that a contrite Heart is not properly from the Gospel; and yet a contrite Heart is the Sacrifice which God will not despise, which he is certainly well-pleased with through Christ, *Psal. 51. 17.* But though Beza was mistaken in saying, that a contrite Heart is not properly from the Gospel, yet he plainly saw the main Truth which we plead for, and confessed it, and proved it by clear Scripture, that sincere Repentance goes before pardon of sin.

The same Beza, in his Confession of Faith, Chap. 4. Art. 3. says, *Pater Castissima nobis annunciat, &c. De Alacrisse Pater declarat, vobis, that he hath so loved the World, that he hath given his only begotten Son for it, on condition, on that condition, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life.* And Art. 6. he says, that Faith embraces, and appropriates to ones self, Christ and all that is in him; for since he is offered unto be possessed by us, with this condition, if we believe in him; one of the conditions, must necessarily be, to wit, either that all be in Christ, which is necessary to our Salvation: Or if all be in him, then we possess all things, who possess in Christ by Faith.

And in his more Confession, Art. 10. *Quam mirum concludere possumus, in Iesu Christo contra omnia mala que conscientias nostras terrore possunt pressensu remedia reperiri: Sed addenda est conditio, si ista remedia nobis applicemus.* Therefore we may justly conclude, that in our Jesus Christ there are found remedies, in able remedies against all the evils that can terrify our Conscience: But this condition must be added, if we apply those remedies to our selves. We see Beza put it into his Confession of Faith, as an Article of his Belief, that the Gospel Covenant hath a Condition, and is conditional.

The same Author in his little Book of Questions and Answers, the First Part, to the Question, You say then that Good Works are necessary to Salvation? he answers, that if Faith be necessary to Salvation, then Good Works are likewise necessary to it, (not taken in strict con- sideration as the cause of Salvation, for we are justified,

justified, and therefore true only by Faith in Christ,) but as something that is necessarily joined with Faith, or Real Faith, they are the Children of God, who are led by the Spirit of God. Rom. 8. 14. And John, that he is righteous, who doth righteousness, 1 John 4. 7. — So that it plainly appears they are contentious Men, who condemn the necessity of Good Works, as a false Doctrine. Thus Beza. And we do no more say, that Good Works are necessary, as the cause of Salvation, than he doth; nor do we, any more than he, say that Good Works without Faith are the necessary Condition of obtaining Salvation. On the contrary we say, that Faith is the Spring of all our good Motions, and runs through them all, and that it is Good Works done from a Principle of Faith and Love, which are the necessary Condition of obtaining Salvation.

Lastly, To the Question, What then if Faith be first given to a Man at the point of Death? (for this seems to have been the case of the penitent Thief, who was crucified (with Christ.) What good Works can such a Man do? Beza Answers, *That the Faith of that Thief in a most short time, was unpeakeably energetic, or effectual and operative, for he reproved the other Thief for his blasphemies and wickedness, he abhorred his own Crimes; with a firm and most wonderful Faith, he acknowledged Christ to be an Eternal King, and prayed unto him as a Saviour, under the very ignominy and shame of the Cross, when all his own Disciples were silent, and spoke not one word for him; he did also openly rebuke the Jews for their Cruelty and impious Expressions.* But so it is that Confession of sin, Prayer to God the Father through Christ, and thanksgiving, are the most excellent Works of the First Table, which in no Man can be wholly separated from Faith. And although some may be so prevented by Death, as not to have power to shew forth any works of the Second Table; yet in such a Man Faith is not therefore to be esteemed idle and unfruitful, because it hath Love conjoined, though not in Energie and Act, yet in Power and Principle. Thus far Beza. To which we agree, as we said before, In such extraordinary cases, God requires no more of Men, as absolutely necessary to their Salvation, than they have time and strength to perform; but accepts the will for the deed through Jesus Christ,

2 Cor. 8. 12. *For what shall I do, when I am weak, and when I am without strength?* Our next Witness is Mr. Fox, the Author of the Book of Martyrs. The World hath been told already, in the defence of Gospel-Truth, pag. 35. that holy Mr. Fox in his Latine Book, of Christ freely justifying, maintains that Faith is the proper, receptive, applicative Condition of Justification, and that Repentance is the dispositive Condition, it is that which prepares us for receiving Justification. But some who read that Discourse of his in the Book of Martyrs, which our Author directs them unto, may possibly object, that in the second Volume of the Book of Martyrs, pag. 192. he saith, *The Promise of Life and Salvation is offered unto us freely without any Condition.* We Answer, it is true, he doth say so, but he means, that it is without any Meritorious, Legal Condition, and all such Conditions we reject as much as he did, or any Man can do, as appears by what we have said at large, in giving account of our Judgment concerning this Conditionality of the Covenant. That this was Mr. Fox's true meaning, appears from his own Words in the same Page, a few Lines after, [*The Voice of the Gospel* (saith he) *differeth from the Voice of the Law in this, that it hath no Condition adjoined of our meriting, but only respecteth the Merits of Christ the Son of God.*] If our Author will not admit of this explication of Fox's Words, that he only rejected all Meritorious and Legal Conditions; but will needs have it, that he absolutely rejects all Conditions of the Covenant of Grace, both Legal and Evangelical; then we must say, that he hath little respect to the Memory and Credit of Mr. Fox, since he makes him most shamefully to contradict himself: And was he fit then to write a Book of Martyrs, or to be himself a Witness for the Truth against the Papists! Can he be justly admitted to bear witness against others, who by self-contradiction



is a false Witness against himself. Truly we should be loath to expose that good Man to the scorn of the Papists; and therefore we positively affirm, that he doth not contradict himself at all, because the Conditions are of different kinds which he denies and affirms. He denies that there are any properly, meritorious, legal Conditions of the new Covenant; and so do we: He affirms, that there is a proper Evangelical Condition, to wit Faith and constant Confession: (They are his own Words in his Latine Book aforesaid.) And we join with him in affirming the same.

And now we do further make it known to the People, that Mr. Fox in the said Book concerning Christ freely Justifying, doth grant, that after we are freely justified by Faith in Christ, sincere Obedience to Christ's Commandments is necessary to retain, or not to lose our Justification. These are his own Words,

[ *Quod autem dici solet per obedientiam retineri justificationis gratiam*, Page 369, 370. *ut hoc concedatur aliquo modo, non tamen hinc, &c.* As for that which

useth to be said, that the Grace of Justification is retained by Obedience; though that be granted in some sense, yet it doth not follow from hence that Justification is by Obedience. Moreover when we say, that Justification is retained by Works, that is not so to be taken, as if it were done for the dignity or merit of our Actions, but only for the Redeemer's sake; for whose sake the Person is first accepted; and then the Actions also please God, which otherwise of themselves would be impure, and of no account. But say they, the perseverance or continuance of Justification is lost by wicked works. But we say, evil works are two ways to be considered in us; either as they cleave to us, or remain in us, as in all the Saints through infirmity of the flesh, and we by and by rise again, by Repentance and Faith; and such sin, as the Apostle saith, shall not have dominion over us. Or again, they may be considered, as against our Conscience we willingly give up our selves to sin, that we may serve it with evil delight: But this sort of sin can no wise consist with this Faith of which Paul speaks, which hath place in none, but in those who being turned from sin, are converted unto God. — And in the same Book, pag. 374. Love is necessary, and it pleaseth God,

to wit, in those who are reconciled, and for the sake of Christ. For God naturally rejoiceth in the Obedience of those that are his; which though it be imperfect, yet endeavours such as they are, he approves in those whom he hath reconciled to himself in Christ. So then Faith, that is, Christ apprehended by Faith, justifies us freely. But we again ought by no means to receive that Grace in vain: But he receives it in vain, who never be he, that doth not yield himself obedient to the Commands and Example of Christ. Thus far Mr. Fox; where we see he plainly grants, that sincere Obedience after we are justified, is necessary that we may not lose the Grace of Justification; and this is no more, but that it is necessary to prevent our falling wilfully under the guilt of new sins of Omission and Commission, which without renewing our Faith and Repentance, and returning to God, and our Obedience to him again, would certainly damn us, and sink us into Hell. We mean no more by it, and we believe, that God for Christ's sake will keep all his justified ones from so falling away, but withal we hold, that God keeps us in a justified state, partly by fear of falling into sin, and partly by the Faith of the indispensable necessity of Obedience and Repentance, as means to be used on our part to keep us from falling away. The Lord puts his fear in our Hearts, that we may not depart from him; and he keeps us by his power through Faith unto Salvation.

From Fox we pass to Rolhel, another good Man, unto whom a Famous and Learned Episcopal Divine, Dr. Robert Baron, hath given this Testimony, that he was (*Santissimus & Doctissimus, &c.*) a most Holy and Learned Man, and that the Character of *Moses* might be truly attributed to him; that he was very Meek above all the Men which were upon the Face of the Earth. This Meek Saint wrote a Book of Effectual Calling at Edinburgh, in the Year 1597. just about an Hundred Years agoe. In which he affirms positively, that the Covenant of Grace is conditional, and that both Faith and Repentance go before Justification.

In the First Page of his Book, he says, *Velut, eadem Dei gratia respondent, et adque in Down per Jesum Christum. Responsa duo tales est, quia* Tract de Vocat. Eff. *respondeat conditis promissionibus, &c.* They who are called (effectually) & caci Edit. Herborn. *by the same Grace whereby they are called, answer the call, and believe in God through Jesus Christ. Tota Answer in the All of* 1618.

Faith, which is the very Condition of the Promise that is in the Covenant of Grace. Wherefore Effectual Calling consists in the Promise of the Covenant, which is made on Condition of Faith; and in Faith, *(sive nihil aliud est, quam impletio conditionis,)* which is no other thing, but the fulfilling of the Condition. And in the 24th Chapter, pag. 258. he says, *(Resistentia Justificationem antecedit, &c.)* Repentance goes before Justification; after the manner that Faith and Hope go before it: For it is said of the Baptist, that he preached the Baptism of Repentance for the Remission of sin, Mark 1. 4. and Luke 3. 3. And if any would know, what he means by that Repentance which, he says, goes before Justification; after he had fully and clearly explained the nature of it in all its parts, and shewed it to be an Evangelical Repentance; and distinguished it from that which is called Legal; he tells us in Page 257. what he meant, by giving a short, but comprehensive definition of it; thus, *(Resipiscencia est postulatam Gr. malum jam perpetratum, dolere propter offensam Deum, &c. Et dolere mutatio quadam totius animi a malo in bonum.)* Repentance is a grief or sorrow (after the fault is done, and the sin is committed,) for having thereby offended God, and a change of the whole Soul from Evil to Good, arising from that grief or sorrow. This is the Repentance which Rollock says, goes before Justification; and it is remarkable; that he makes a change of the whole Soul, from Evil to Good, to be essential unto this Repentance; and consequently, that in order of nature before Justification, there is a real change of the whole Soul from Evil to Good. This Doctrine was preached, and written at Edinburgh an Hundred Years ago; and then it was accounted good Divinity, and old Gospel, and the Preacher of it was esteemed, and that deservedly, a great Saint, and a Man of Learning and Judgment, both at home and abroad. How it should come to be New Divinity, and a New Gospel, or part of a new Gospel now, is to us a Mystery; for sure it is an Hundred Years older now, than it was then. Any Body therefore might think, in all reason, that our Author came to late to give it a new Name. There must be some Mystery in this business, what ever it be; We wish it be not a Mystery of Iniquity; *(sive deus homo sint, non est tunc)* From Rollock we pass to Zanchy, because he lived in those Times, and is one of those Divines whom our Author would make the People believe to be for him, and yet to stand against us, and that because he is against us, therefore we are against him; p. 27. him; and generally neglect and despise him. But what if after all this, Zanchy be clearly for us in this matter, then it is to be hoped that 1688, p. 1. our Author himself, will not easily believe, that we not only neglect, but despise our good Friend. And that he is such, we are content that his own Words should judge between us; *(Credimus ad beatam vitam per Jesum Christum per Zanch. de Relig. participationem, eoque ad adiutorium cum Christo necessarium esse participatorem.)* Ties. 1. *participationem, &c.* We believe that Repentance is necessary, in order to a true participation of the Righteousness of Christ; and therefore to come Mark 1. 4. 15. *united with Christ; whereby being turned from sin, and the World, Luke 13. 3. 5. through the change of our Mind and Will, we may be converted into Christ, and close united into him; and in the end we may obtain Remission of sins in him, and from him, and may be clothed with his Righteousness and Holiness.*

1. Here we see, that Zanchy held Repentance to be antecedently necessary in order of Nature, to the obtaining of Remission of sins, through the Righteousness of Christ.

2. That by Repentance we are turned from sin and the world, and changed in our Mind and Will. From which Premises this Conclusion necessarily follows; that before we be Justified, and our sins forgiven, there must be a real change in us, and our Minds and Wills must be turned from sin and the World. This is a hard saying

to those who would have their Justification and pardon, and likewise their sin and the World altogether. But though it be hard, it is true and good, and that not merely because Zanchy saies so, but because he proves it by the plain Word of God who can neither deceive, nor be deceived. *Mark* 1. 4, 15. *Luke* 13. 3, 4.

And if we may believe the same Zanchy, this is not only true and good Law, but it is likewise true and good Gospel. For says he, *Id est Evangelio juxta significationem in Ecclesia receptam usitatamque creditur nihil aliud esse quam, &c.*

Concerning the Gospel according to the Signification received and Zanch. de Relig. commonly used in the Church, we believe that it is nothing but an Hea- Christ. Vol. 3. p. venly Doctrine concerning Christ, &c. to wit, that Mankind is redeemed by the Death of Christ, & that free Remission of all sins is prepared 509.

for, or is ready for all Men (*modo respiciant, &c.*) so this, or on condition that they repent and believe in Jesus Christ. These words of Zanchy are so plain, they need no Commentary to make them plainer. We with our Author do not himself despise Zanchy for their sake, since in those few words, he hath comprehended the whole Summ of the new Gospel (so called,) which is a good deal above Sixteen Hundred years old. Zanchy in the same place says, *Tri sunt Evangelii capita, quae a nobis exiguntur ut praestemus, penitentia in deum, &c.* There are three heads, or principal parts of the Gospel, which we are required to do, Repentance towards God; Faith in Jesus Christ, and a studious care to observe whatsoever Christ hath commanded. And again, The Gospel (saith he) requires only these three things. That being touched with a serious grief for all the sins of our whole Life, we desire from the heart that our mind and all our affections may be changed and renewed by God unto an obedient compliance with his Divine Will. And that this may be done, that we will it of God by Prayer, and use our own endeavours in order to the effecting of it. Then that embracing Christ with a true Faith, &c. In all this it is evident, that Zanchy requires something else besides Faith, to be done by us in order to our obtaining Justification and pardon of Sin; as also declares that after we are justified we must endeavour to do all things whatsoever Christ hath commanded. Yea he saith that not only the Law of God, but the Gospel of Christ requireth all these things: And elsewhere in his Miscellanies he says, That if after Justification the Saints fall into wilful sins against Knowledge and Conscience, they must renew their Faith and Repentance, and return unto the Lord, and to their Obedience, or else they cannot be saved, but are undone for ever. To Zanchy we may add the Testimony of Musculus, that Holy and Learned Divine, in whom God's special care of his faithful Servants appeared in an extraordinary manner; but because it is so notorious that Musculus is for us, that we cannot think our Author is to ignorant of matters of fact, as not to know it, we shall quote but one short passage out of him. *Differendum est inter eam gratiam Dei, quae nullas habet adhaerens conditiones, — Et eam quae conditionaliter confertur, ad quem modum peccatorum nobis remissa contingit.* We must distinguish between that Grace of God, which hath no conditions annexed to it, — and that which is given conditionally, after which manner we obtain the remission of sins.

Sharpus also gives in his Testimony for us in the matter we are treating of; See his Book of Justification written in the Year 1609. Where page 98, he says, (*in fœdera gratia duo sunt.*) (1.) Substantia, &c.) Sharpus Testif. de There are two things in the Covenant of Grace. (1.) The substance of the Covenant, which is that Righteousness and Salvation is given unto the Church, through Christ. The (2d.) Is the Condition annexed to the Covenant, if the Members of the Church believe: And 172, The promise of Eternal Life is otherwise conditional, than by the perfect fulfilling of the Law. For it is said, he that believeth, shall be saved, *Act* 16. 31. *Mark* 16. 16. and page 174. Licet ista sint conditio sine qua non, non tamen saltem efficient. Although these things (to wit Love and Holyness, and Continuance therein) are a condition without which we are not saved, yet they are not the efficient cause of Salvation. And page 177, 178,

We grant it follows from Rom. 10. 10. That Confession of Christ with the mouth is necessary to Salvation, because by this way and means we must go to Salvation, or to Heaven. — page 207. Good Works are necessary that we may escape Temporal and Eternal punishments, which God threatens to inflict upon the Transgressors of his Law, Rom. 8. 13. 1. Thess. 4. 5, 6. — page 69. The conditions of the Wordless, are Faith, Repentance, Patience, &c. Finally page iii. God doth not forgive sins but to the penitent, though not for their Repentance, but for the merit of Christ. — And a little after, spiritualis vita, &c. As Spiritual Life is given us freely in Christ by Faith only, so it is preserved and cherished by Prayer, Repentance, and other Spiritual Exercises.

The professors of Leyden in their Synopsis of purer Divinity first published in the Year 1624, taught the same Doctrine. Witness what they write in the said Book, p. 271. *Thef. 29. Non omnem conditionem necessarium in Evangelio & N. Test. requiri ad salutem: Requiritur enim conditio fidei & novae obedientiae, quae ubique urgetur, &c.* We do not deny that any condition is required unto Salvation in the Gospel, and New Testament: For there is required the condition of Faith and new Obedience, which is every where urged. But these conditions are freely given by God, neither if they be sincere, do they by their imperfection hinder our Salvation, which proceeds from another cause. Here we see those four Learned Doctors, Polander, Rivet, Waleus and Thysius held that not only Faith, but new and sincere Obedience is the condition of obtaining Salvation, so that both together make up the one intire condition of the Gospel.

Gomar, another Learned Professor of Divinity in the Netherlands, a Member of the Synod of Dort, saith, That the Gospel is called God's Covenant. *Opera Gomar. par. 3. tract. 1. (Quia mutuum Dei & hominum obligationem de vita dispo. 14. Thef. 29. eterni, ipsis certa condicione danda promulgat) because it promulgates the mutual obligation of God and Men, concerning the giving of Eternal Life upon their performing a certain condition: And it is called the Covenant of God, (ide salute per Christum gratuita) concerning free Salvation by Christ, because God in the Gospel of meer Grace publisheth and offereth unto all men whatsoever, on condition of true Faith, not only Christ and perfect Righteousness in him for Reconciliation and Eternal Life; but also he promisseth unto his Elect, and perfecteth in them, the promised Condition of Faith and Repentance. Here we see Gomar holds Repentance to be part of the intire Condition of the Gospel Covenant. Where Pemble of Justification agrees the Testimony of Pemble, who saith, (The Condition of Faith, &c.) The Covenant of Grace, (required in them that shall be justified) is Faith. Chap. 1. page 22. — Believe this and live, is a compact of the freest and purest Mercy, wherein the Reward of Eternal Life is given us in favour to that, which bears not the least proportion of worth with it: So that he that performs the Condition, cannot yet demand the wages, as due unto him in severity of Justice, but only by the Grace of a free promise, the fulfilling of which he may humbly sue for. — And again, Although (saith he) the Act of Justification of a sinner be properly the only work of God, for the only merit of Christ: Yet is it rightly ascribed unto Faith, and it alone, forasmuch as Faith is the main Condition of the New Covenant, which, as we must performe, if we will be justified; so by the performance whereof, we are said to obtain Justification and Life. Here it is observable that Pemble saith, That Faith is the main Condition of the Covenant of Grace, which implies there is some Condition besides, but subordinate to Faith. And this we do firmly hold that Faith is the main Condition, because it is the only receptive, applicative Condition, to which Repentance the dispositive Condition and all our after-Obedience is subordinate.*

Perkins another of those Divines, whom we are said to deſiſe, gives his Vote alſo for the conditionality of the Covenant of Grace.

Witness what he writes in his Reformed Catholick [In the Covenant of Grace, two things muſt be conſidered: The Subſtance thereof, and the Condition. The ſubſtance of the Covenant is, That Righteouſneſs and Life Everlaſting is given to God's Church and People by Chriſt. The Condition is, That we for our parts are by Faith to receive the ſoreſaid benefits. And this Condition is by Grace as well as the ſubſtance.]

Reformed Catholick  
part 4. of Juſtification  
the manner, diſſect. 2.  
Reason 1.

And in his little Latine Tract of Predeſtination, and the Grace of God, (which Dr. Twiſs defended againſt Arminius, in his Book called *Vindicia Gratiæ*) he ſays, [*Gratiæ ſecunda eſt vel imputata vel inherens. Imputata eſt in Juſtificatione, cujus pars remiſſio peccatorum, &c. The ſecond Grace is either imputed or inher-*

Perkins de Predeſt.  
et gratiæ edit. Cant.  
An. 1598. pag. 130.

rent. Imputed Grace is in Juſtification, whereof a part is Remiſſion of ſins, and this Juſtification and Remiſſion with reſpect to ſins paſt, remains firm, and will ſo remain for ever. That ſaying of the Schoolmen is moſt true: Sins once remitted never return. But when any true Believer hath fallen into ſome grievous, hainous ſin, the pardon of that deſection or backſliding is indeed purpoſed and decreed by God; yet it hath no actual exiſtence at all on God's part, nor is it received at all on man's part, till he repent: Yea, if he ſhould never repent, (which yet is impoſſible,) for that one ſin he would be damned as guilty of Eternal Death. For there is no new pardon of any new ſin, without a new Act of Faith and Repentance.

This paſſage of Mr. Perkins implies to the full, all that we have ſaid concerning the neceſſity of Repentance, as the diſpoſitive condition of obtaining the pardon of our ſins, and concerning the neceſſity of ſincere Obedience continued from a Principle of Faith and Love, or (after any notable backſliding,) renewed by new Acts of Faith and Repentance, as the Condition of getting poſſeſſion of the Heavenly inheritance.

Of the ſame Judgment was Pareus, for thus he writes in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans: *Fidem inferit, ut doceat fidem eſſe conditionem, ſub qua Chriſtus nobis datus eſt propitiatorium. The Apoſtle*

Commentary on the  
Pareus in Rom. 3.  
25.

inferſs Faith in the 25th verſe to teach us that Faith is the Condition, under which Chriſt is given us for a propitiation. And again in the writing againſt the five Arminian Articles, which he ſent to the Synod of Dort,

the Synod of Dort,

(not being able to go himſelf by reaſon of Age) and which was read in, highly approved by, and recorded in the Acts of the Synod, he ſays that [*Conditio certaminis, precum et vigilantia, omni-*

Act. Synod. Dord.  
part. 1. p. 254.

*nis eſt neceſſaria ad perſeverantiam.*] The Condition of fighting and praying, and watching is altogether neceſſary unto perſeverance. But then he adds in

oppoſition to the Arminians, That the ſaid Condition is wrought in the faithful by the Spirit of God; which he proves from Deut. 30. 6. Jer. 32. 40. Ezek. 35. 27. 1 Pet. 1. 5, &c. And to what the Arminians ſaid that the Condition is commanded and not

promiſed, he answers [*Promiſſiones de ipſa conditioe fidei, precum, perſeverantia, in fidelibus perſpirum Dei efficienda, diſerte loquuntur, &c. The promiſes plainly ſpeak of the*

Condition of Faith, Prayer, Perſeverance, as that which is to be effected in Believers by the Spirit of God. Nor doth it follow that the effecting of the Condition is not promiſed, be-

cauſe it is commanded and required of the faithful. For it is alſo commanded that they fear God and walk in his Commandments, and yet God promiſeth: I will put my fear in their

hearts, &c. I will cauſe them to walk in my Statutes, &c. But it is commanded not that they can (of themſelves,) but that they ought to perform it, that ſo being ſenſible of

their own weakneſs, they may know what they ought to aſk of God; neither yet do theſe promiſes (wholly) exclude the great or ſmall lapses and ſins of the Saints; but they raiſe up

the fallen again that they be not ruined. For the promiſes alſo are expreſſy extended unto the Religious, ſometimes fallen into ſin. Pſal. 37. 24. and 89. 30, 31, 32, 33, 34.

The



The same Author writing against the Papists upon the same subject, faith, [*Fides* *non dicitur justificare, cum actum proprium, &c.* Faith is then said to justify when it can exercise, and doth exercise its proper act of Receiving Remission of sins, but a Faith that is sick, wounded, oppressed with the filth of the flesh, and as it were bound with the fetters of sin, doth not exercise, nor can it exercise that act—and

a little after. But God doth not impute sin to the just that are fallen, to wit, when they repent; but before they repent, he doth indeed impute sin to them by inflicting temporal punishments, and unless they repented he would impute sin to them by inflicting also eternal punishments. [And he thus concludes,] *Tunc igitur fides in lapsis, habitualiter tantum manens, proprie justificans dici, aut eos justificare non potest.* Therefore Faith then remaining habitually only in the lapses, it cannot properly be said to be justifying, or to justify them. Thus far Pareus: Whereby we plainly see that he held the Covenant of Grace to be conditional, as we do; that Faith and Repentance are conditions of it, especially Faith, is the main condition, by the acts whereof we are justified, and receive Remission of sin, not by the habit, because it is the Act and not the Habit that receives Christ and Remission of sins through him. (2.) He held that after Justification, sincere Obedience to the Lord in the avoiding of wilful presumptuous sins of Omission and Commission, is a Condition so necessary to the obtaining of Eternal Salvation that without such Obedience (either continued without intermission, or (after some notable intermission of its acts, and weakening of its habit) renewed again by new acts of Faith and Repentance,) Salvation cannot be obtained, nor Damnation avoided. (3.) That though there be such conditions required of the Elect in order to justification, and of the justified in order to Salvation, yet they are not uncertain as to the event, but shall, through special, effectual Grace, be infallibly performed, and the Elect and Justified shall be eternally saved. This was the Gospel that Pareus preached, and the Synod of Dort approved; And it is that, and no other, which we preach also. Therefore it must needs be a great falsehood and slander, that we preach a new Arminian Gospel.

We find likewise that the Divines of Geneva, Deodat and Tronchin in the Synod of Dort were for the conditionality of the Covenant of Grace in the sense before explained, for thus they write in their suffrage concerning the second Article.

*Fides est revera conditio novi fœderis, respectu ordinis invariabilis. A. Synod. Dordrecht. part. 2. page 132.* *Fides* is indeed the Condition of the new Covenant, in respect of the inviolable order instituted by God, but it is also a promised gift of the new Covenant, and an effect of our ingrafting into Christ.

In these words (1.) We observe, That in the judgment of those Divines approved by the Synod of Dort, God by his absolute will hath instituted a conditional order between the antecedent and subsequent blessings of the new Covenant. (2.) That Faith is the Condition ordained by God for obtaining the subsequent blessings of the Covenant, such as Justification, Pardon of sin, &c. (3.) That it is not habitual Faith, or the first habitual, seminal permanent principle of Faith, but it is actual Faith, because they say that it is the effect of our ingrafting into Christ; but the first seminal permanent principle of Faith is not the effect of our ingrafting into Christ, otherwise we should be ingrafted into Christ before we have so much as the least seminal principle of Faith, since the cause must be before the effect. Therefore to avoid that absurdity, we think they meant that our ingrafting into Christ begins in the Spirit's working in us the seminal principle of Faith, which concurs to the producing of the Act of Faith, which being our formal vital Act, though produced by the Virtue of the Seminal Principle, and the effectual influence of the Spirit, is the Condition of the Covenant performed by us, and withal, is the effect of our initial ingrafting into Christ. The same Doctrine is believed and professed at Geneva at this day, Witness what was lately Taught and Published by Turrein Professor of Divinity there.

In Page 191. of that Book he saith, that Christ requires both of us a, holiness in  
 in God's Promise, and Obedience to his Commandments, in the Divine Institution of the  
 and Conditions of the Covenant. And in the same Page he saith, that Theological, shall  
 The form of Words wherein the new Covenant is expressed (I will be to you a Father, &c.)  
 your God, and you shall be my People.) comprehends both the Benefits (Gen. 17. 10.)  
 promised on God's part, and the Duties required on our part; and hath added to the words  
 he explains at large what promised Benefits on God's part are signified in the Words (I will  
 be your God.) Secondly, he shews what Duties required on our parts are implied  
 in the Words (you shall be my People.) After he had in general opened the mean-  
 ing of the foresaid Form of the Covenant, he comes to particulars; and in the 10.  
 Paragraph he saies, The Principal Duties required of us are Faith, and Repentance:  
 Faith, which embraces the Promise, and Repentance, which fulfils the Commandments:  
 Faith answers to the Promise of Grace; believe, and thou shalt be saved; Repentance is  
 commanded (in the Evangelical Law, which before me, and be thou  
 perfect, Gen. 17. 10.) For on God's part, there are two principal Benefits of the Covenant,  
 Remission of sins, and the writing of the Law in the Heart; so on Man's part, two Duties  
 ought to answer unto them, to wit, Faith which applies unto the Remission of sins; and  
 Repentance, in the study and endeavour of Sanctification, which redounds unto practice the  
 Law written in the Heart, by walking in God's Statutes; which Christ meant when he said,  
 Mark 11. 19. Repent, and believe the Gospel, &c.

In Page 202. he puts the Question, Whether the Covenant of Grace be condition-  
 al, and what are the Conditions of it? And in Answer to it, he distinguishes between  
 several sorts of Conditions, and as we have done, shews that in some sense it is not  
 Conditional; and then he concludes, that in another sense it is Conditional; and  
 Page 203. he proves it by three Arguments: (1.) Because it is proposed with a Condition  
 expressed, (John 1. 12. &c. Rom. 10. 9. Acts 8. 37. Mark 16. 16.) And frequently in  
 other places. (2.) Because if it were not conditional, there would be no place for Threat-  
 nings in the Gospel, which cannot be denied; but against those who neglect to performe  
 the Condition prescribed. For the neglect of Faith and Obedience cannot be culpable, if  
 they be not required. (3.) Because otherwise it would follow, that in this Covenant God is  
 bound to Man, but Man is not bound to God, which is manifestly absurd, and contrary to the  
 nature of all Covenants, wherein there is a mutual Agreement, and reciprocal Obligation;  
 whereby the Parties Covenanting are bound to one another.

Afterwards in Page 204. he comes to Answer the Second Branch of the Question,  
 to wit, Which are the Conditions of the New Covenant? And saies, that as for  
 Faith, there is no question but it is the Condition of the Covenant, because the  
 Scripture so clearly affirms it so to be, Joh. 3. 16. Rom. 1. 16, 17. and 10. 9. And he  
 saies, that Faith is the Condition of the Covenant, as it hath respect unto, and is  
 the Instrumental Means of our Union with Christ. Yea he maintains (as we do)  
 that in this sense Faith is the onely Condition, because there is no other Condition,  
 that is of a receptive, applicative Nature, as Faith is; no other, that receives Christ,  
 and applies his Righteousness, as Faith doth. But in another sense, there are other  
 Conditions of the Covenant besides Faith, that is, if the Word *Conditions* be taken  
 for all those things which a Man by the Covenant of Grace is bound to do, then no-  
 thing hinders, but Repentance and new Obedience may be called a Condition; be-  
 cause they are comprehended among the Duties of the Covenant, John 13. 17. 2 Cor.  
 5. 17. Rom. 8. 13. Moreover he holds, that though new Obedience be not the pri-  
 mary antecedent, yet it is the secondary subsequent Condition of the Covenant, be-  
 cause being by Faith the primary Condition actually brought into Covenant, new  
 Obedience is (medium et via per quam tendimus ad plenam possessionem bonorum fœderis)  
 the means and way by which we come to the full possession of the good things of  
 the Covenant. He saith, we should distinguish between the Condition of Justifica-  
 tion, and the Condition of the Covenant; the Promise of Justification is not the  
 whole of the Covenant, and therefore that which is the Condition of the Promise of  
 Justification

Justification, is not the whole Condition of the Covenant, which adequately considered, is of larger extent than the Promise of Justification. He tells us lastly, that we should distinguish between the first accepting of the Covenant, and the after-keeping of the Covenant: Faith accepts the Covenant by receiving the Promises; Obedience keeps the Covenant by fulfilling the Commands. Be ye holy, for I am holy. And yet this Obedience is not Legal, but Evangelical, because it is not meritorious, it is the Fruit and Effect of an antecedent Principle of Spiritual Life wrought in us, and of the actual Influence of the Spirit of Grace upon us; and it is not rigorously exacted in the highest degree of Perfection, as indispensably necessary to Salvation; but though it be imperfect, yet it is admitted and accepted through Christ, if it be sincere.

We have here given a true and faithful account of the Judgment of the Learned and Judicious *Turretin*, concerning the Conditionality of the Covenant of Grace, with whom we agree in this matter, which contains the sum of the Gospel, as to Man's Duty especially; and therefore, if *Turretin* was no Legal Preacher, no more are we, and if he preached no new Gospel, no more do we; for we preach the same Gospel, and in the same manner, as he did. There is one thing more wherein this worthy Divine and we do perfectly agree, and that is concerning true Believers fallen into wilful sin against Knowledge and Conscience. We say they cannot be saved till they have first recovered themselves, through Grace, by renewing their Faith and Repentance, and returning to their Obedience again. Now he says the same thing, witness what he writes in the same Book, Pag. 671, 672. where he says, *That if a Believer fallen into gross sin against his Conscience, be considered in himself, and as guilty of such sin not repented of, (verum est reum esse mortis, et si in eo statu moreretur certo damnandum,) it is true, that he is guilty of death, and if he dyed in that state, he would be certainly damned; but if he be considered with respect to God's Decree of Election, he is rightly said to be one, who is to be absolved, or pardoned and saved; God so ordering the matter, by his immense Love and Wisdom, that he never dies in that state, but by a renewed Act of Faith and Repentance, he is first restored, and returns into the way, before he come to the end. Whence it is, that according to a twofold respect, these two Propositions, although they seem to be contrary, may be both together true. It is impossible that David, a Person elected, and a Man according to God's own Heart, should perish: It is impossible that David, an Adulterer and Murderer, if Death seize on him before he have repented, should be saved. The first of these Propositions is true, in respect of God's Decree of Election. The second is true also, in respect of the heinousness and demerit of David's sin. But God's Providence and Grace looseth this Knot, by taking care, that neither David, nor any of the Elect, dye in that state, in which for his impenitence, he should be excluded from Salvation.*

This Passage shows, that *Turretin* believed, as we do, that after Justification sincere Obedience is so indispensably necessary to Salvation, that unless a Believer continue in the practice of sincere Obedience, or if there happen to be any signal intermission by gross wilful sin for a time, unless he renew his Faith and Repentance, and thereby return to his Obedience, he cannot be saved. And *Turretin* a little before, in Page 669. says very judiciously, *That though God hath promised perseverance to Believers, yet hath he not promised it to be given absolutely, and without means, but by means to be used by Man himself, so that whilst God keeps Man, he is bound also to keep himself by the Grace of the Spirit, 1 John 5. 18. Whence Believers are sure of their perseverance through the Faith of the Promises, not by any external force, which retains them in the way of Salvation, will they, will they, yea even whilst they are living in their sins; but in the use of Means, and practice of Piety, whilst working out their own Salvation with fear and trembling, they are confident that it is God who works in them, both to will and to do, and who graciously perfects the good Work which he hath begun. So that an occasion of licentiousness and impiety is wrongfully inferred from this Doctrine, since to indulge wickedness, and to have the Grace, which causeth perseverance, are utterly inconsistent. Yea, he that hath this Hope perfecteth himself, 1 John 3. 3. And he ought to be certainly persuaded in himself,*

that

that without holiness no Man shall see God, and that there is no other way to Life, but the way of Piety and Goodness. A most Excellent Passage this is, which fully expresses our sense, and to which we heartily subscribe.

Agreeable to this is that which we find in Mr. Rutherford's Examination of Arminianism, Chap. 13. Pag. 594. That a Promise, that we shall persevere in Faith, and obtain Eternal Salvation, though we walk after the Flesh, and lead a wicked life, may be called a *dissolute Promise*, but that we do not maintain an absolute Promise of perseverance in that *dissolute sense*; for though the Promise of perseverance in Faith be *absolute*, yet it is always joined with an *absolute Promise of perseverance in Holiness and Obedience*; and as it is necessary to Salvation, that Elect Believers continue in Faith, so it is necessary that they continue in Holiness and Obedience. And if for some time there happen to be an intermission of Faith and Obedience, there must be a renewing of them again, that we may obtain Salvation, and this renovation of our Faith and Obedience is the effect of the absolute Promise; but not the obtaining of Salvation, without and before the renewing of our Faith and Repentance, and returning to our Obedience. This is plainly Rutherford's sense. And indeed he goes further than we have done, in that he ascribes an inferior kind of Causality to Obedience and good Works in order to the obtaining of Eternal Salvation; for which he quotes Calvin, Bucer, Zanchy, and Voetius, yea he quotes the Apostle Paul, 2 Cor. 4. 17. saying, *Examen Armin. cap. 12.* that our light Afflictions, which are but for a Moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory. In the Pages 531, 532, 533. of that Book. Again, he says expressly, *That the hope of Eternal Life (ex eo vana esse colligitur, si non unitatur sincera obedientia tanquam fulcro secundario, 1 Johan. 3. 3.) is hence proved to be vain and groundless, if it be not upheld by sincere obedience, as a secondary stay or prop.* Pag. 592. of the same Book. And in another Book he saith, that it is a new Heresy of Antinomians to deny a Conditional Gospel; it is all one, *Survey of Antin. Part II. p. 63.* as to belye the Holy Ghost, who saith, He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not is condemned already. Spanhemius likewise, a very Learned Divine, and zealous against the Arminians, in his Disputation at Leyden, concerning the five controverted Articles, saith in the 34th. Thesis or Position, (*Omnibus equidem externe vocatis annuntiator promissio Evangelii, non tamen absolute sed conditionate, si resistant & credant.*) The Promise of the Gospel is indeed preached to all that are outwardly called, yet not absolutely, but conditionally, if they believe and repent. And Thes. 35. For as it is in vain, that a great Good is ready at hand to us, unless we either take and receive, or fulfil the Condition which is required in the Covenant and Promise of it; so that infinite benefit of Redemption, is in vain purchased for us by Christ, except we embrace it with a sure confidence, and performe Faith and Repentance unto God requiring them as the terms of the Covenant, John 3. 16. Acts 2. 38. And to draw towards a close, with the Testimonies of some of our own English Divines, we find that Dr. Robert Abbot writing against Thompson, saith, (*Credi non debet remissio peccatorum ante penitentiam, & penitere aliquem de peccato non potest, quod nondum est, &c.*) It ought not to be believed, that Remission of sins is before Repentance; and a Man cannot repent of a sin, that is not yet committed, &c. Again, Remission of sins is never decreed for any (of ripe years) without Repentance, nor is it ever granted upon another Condition, (that is, another dispositive Condition;) the Faith therefore of Remission should not anticipate Repentance, &c. Neither let us think, that without Repentance we ought ever to say, Forgive us our trespasses, &c.

And because our Authour saith, that God hath blessed England with an Ames and Twiss against the Arminians, and that we neglect and despise them; we will alledge some Testimonies out of their Writings, by which the World may judge, whether those two great Divines be for him, or for us, in this cause. And first for Dr. Ames, in his Answer to Grevinckhovius, page 138. he says, (*Quod fides hac non sit volitionis ipsius divina conditio, sed salutis assequende tantum, hanc ego sententiam meam esse fateor, veramque cum Deo præsisturum me confido.*) That this Faith of ours, is not the condition of Gods will it self, but that it is only, the condition

Abbot. contra Thomam  
soni Diatrib. de In-  
tercis. Justif. p. 212.

Let. p. 13. p. 27.

dition of our obtaining Salvation; I confess this to be my opinion, and I trust, with Gods help, that I shall prove it to be true. We observe here, that *After distinguishing between Gods will of our Salvation, and our Salvation it self, which is the object of his will.* As for the first, to wit Gods Will, Faith is not, cannot be the Condition of Gods Will, because it is Eternal and Absolute, and cannot possibly depend upon any Condition whatsoever. But the second, to wit our Salvation, the object of Gods Will, it may have, and hath a Condition; and God hath absolutely willed, that it should have, and depend upon a Condition, and that Faith should be the Condition on which our obtaining of it doth depend. This is his meaning, and we agree with him in it.

The same Author in another Book, his Marrow of Divinity, saith, *That the Promises of the Gospel are without any discrimination proposed unto all, together with a Command to believe; but they are not performed unto all, because Men themselves fail in performing the Condition: but unto the Elect the Condition is given, that the Promises may be performed to them.* Which he proves by three Scriptures (Eph. 2. 8. Rom. 8. 31. and chap. 11. ver. 18.) whereof one proves Faith, and the other two prove Repentance to be the Gift of God. Whence it is most evident that he thought Repentance as well as Faith, to be the condition of the Gospel-Promises.

Again in the same Book, and next Chapter, he says, *This Justification is for Christ considered not absolutely, in which sense Christ is also the cause of effectual vocation, but for Christ apprehended by faith, which faith follows effectual calling as its effect, and goes before justification, as the Instrumental Cause apprehending that Righteousness of Christ, upon which Righteousness is apprehended, justification follows.* In this Passage we highly approve the order in which he placeth things, as putting effectual calling in order of nature before faith, and Faith before justification: But where he saith, that Faith is the Instrumental Cause apprehending the Righteousness of Christ, for which we are justified, some possibly may think, that he ascribes too much unto Faith, yet we think, that the difference between him and those who do not love to say, that Faith is an Instrumental Cause, is more verbal than real; for he doth not say, that Faith is the Instrumental cause of our justification, (that indeed had been to ascribe too much unto Faith;) but the Instrumental cause receiving Christ and his Righteousness, upon which follows justification; now we all acknowledge Faith to be of an apprehensive, receptive nature, and that it is the Instrumental means whereby we apprehend and receive Christ, and his Righteousness, that we may be justified; and our using that Instrumental means, as the Lord hath appointed, is the receptive condition to which the Promise of justification is made. Here then seems to be a meer difference in words, when we mean the same thing. Lastly, for sincere Obedience, he holds it to be, in some sense, a cause of obtaining Eternal Life; which is

more than we have ascribed to it, in calling it a Condition, for a Condition as such hath no causal Influence. His own Words in the said Book are these, *Our Obedience indeed is not the principal, or meritorious cause of Eternal Life. For we receive the right of this life, and the life also it self from the Grace and Gift of God, for the sake of Christ apprehended by faith: Rom. 6. 23. The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. But yet it is a cause some way administering, helping and moving forward towards the possession of this life, whereof we had the right before; for which reason it is called the way, in which we walk to Heaven, Eph. 2. 10. And it promotes our life, both of its own nature; because it is some degree of life it self, still tending to perfection; and also by virtue of Gods Promise, who hath promised Eternal Life to those who walk in his Commandments: Gal. 8. 8. He that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting. For though all our Obedience, while we live here, is imperfect, and contaminated with some mixture of sin: Gal. 5. 17. The flesh fights against the spirit, yet through Christ it is so acceptable unto God, that it is crowned with a most great reward. The Promises therefore made to the Obedience of the Faithful, are not Legal but Evangelical, although by some they are said to be of a mixed nature. In all this, Amos ascribes as much to sincere Obedience, and makes it as necessary to Salvation,*



as we do. If we say it is a Condition, he says it is in some sort a Cause of obtaining the possession of Eternal Salvation. And sure to be so a Cause, is as much at least, as to be a Condition. Next let us see what Dr. Twiss saith to these things. Indeed he is so clearly on our side, that if the Author of the Letter had been acquainted with his Writings, he would have been wiser than to have mentioned his Name in this Cause. For thus he writes, [ We say that pardon of sin and salvation of Souls are Benefits purchased by the death of Christ, to be enjoyed by Men, but how? not absolutely but conditionally, to wit, in case, and onely in case they believe. For like as God doth not confer these on any of ripe years, unless they believe, so Christ hath not merited that they should be conferred on any, but such as believe, and accordingly profess, that Christ dyed for all, that is, to obtain pardon of sin, and salvation of Soul for all, but how? not absolutely, whether they believe or no, but onely conditionally, to wit, provided they do believe in Christ.

Answer to a Booke called, The Synod of Dort and Arles reduced to practice, pag. 16.

Again, Men are called upon to believe, and promised, that upon their Faith, they shall obtain the Grace of Remission of sins, and Salvation; and these Graces may be said to be offered unto all upon Condition of faith. Ibid. pag. 28.

Again, As touching the Benefits of pardon of sin, and Salvation procured by Christs death, we say, that Christ died to procure these for all, and every one, but how? not absolutely, for then all, and every one, should be saved; but conditionally, to wit, upon Condition of faith; so that if all, and every one, should believe in Christ, all and every one should be saved. Ibid. page 152.

Again, It is untrue, that we must have a sufficient assurance, that Christ died to procure pardon of sin, and salvation of soul absolutely for him, whom we go about to comfort; it is enough, that Christ died to procure these Benefits for him conditionally, to wit, in case he believe and repent, and of this we have a most sufficient assurance. Ibid. pag. 154.

Again, We say not here, that any thing becomes true, by the Faith of him that believes it; but onely this, that the benefit which is procured for all, and every one, upon a Condition, becomes his, and peculiarly his alone, who performeth the Condition. Ibid. pag. 163.

Again, Now Eternal Life, we know, is ordained by God to be the portion of Men, not whether they believe or not; whether they persevere in Faith, Holiness, and Repentance, or no; but onely of such as believe, repent, and are studious of good Works; for it is ordained to be bestowed on Men by way of reward of their Faith, Repentance, and good Works. Ibid. pag. 171.

Again, The Promises assured by Baptism, according to the Rule of Gods Word, I find to be of two sorts: Some are of Benefits procured unto us by Christ, which are to be conferred on us conditionally; — they of this first sort are Justification and Salvation; for Abraham received Circumcision, as a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith; Circumcision therefore was an assurance of Justification to be had by Faith; if such were Circumcision to the Jews; we have good reason to conceive, that such is Baptism unto us Christians; for as that was unto them, so this is the Sacrament of Regeneration unto us; And good reason, the Sacraments, which are Seals of the Covenant, should assure that unto us, which the word of the Covenant doth make Promise of. Now, the word of the Covenant of Grace doth promise unto us both Remission of sin, and Salvation, upon Faith in Christ. This by our Doctrine we promise unto all, and assure unto all, as well as they do by theirs. If all, and every one should believe, we nothing doubt, but they should be justified and saved. On the other side, if not one of ripe years, should believe, I presume our Adversaries will confess, that not one of them should be saved. Ibid. pag. 189.

Again, Justification and Salvation is promised in the Word, and assured in the Sacraments, upon performance of a Condition on Mans part. Now the Condition of Justification and Salvation, we all acknowledge to be Faith. Thus Dr. Twiss frequently in the foresaid Booke. And that this was his settled Judgment will appear by what he wrote afterwards in the Year 1634. in Answer to Mr. Hards Booke, called

called *Gods Love to Sinners*, which Answer was Printed after his Death by Mr. *James*, a very Learned and Zealous Calvinist, in the Year 1693. at Oxford, *Twis* against *Hard*, The Ministers of the New Testament, are called Ministers not of the Letter, but of the Spirit; that is, not of the Law, the Ministry whereof, is not the Ministry of the Spirit, but yet this is rightly to be understood, to wit, of the Spirit of Adoption; for undoubtedly even the Ministry of the Law, is the Ministry of the Spirit also, but of the Spirit of Bondage, to hold Men under fear. It is called the Ministry of Condemnation, and the Reason hereof I conceive to be, because God doth not concur with the Ministry of the Law, by the Holy Spirit, to work any Man to the performance of the Condition of the Law, which is exact and perfect Obedience. But thus he doth concur with the Ministry of the Gospel, namely, by his Spirit, to work Men to the performance of the Condition thereof, which is Faith in Christ and true Repentance, therefore the Letter, to wit, of the Law, is called a killing Letter; but the Gospel is joined with a quickening Spirit, and therefore Piscator conceives, that the Gospel in this place is called by the Name of the Spirit. So then the Gospel giveth Life by the Spirit, which accompanieth the Ministry thereof, &c.

And in the same Book, he saith, [ Some Benefits are bestowed upon Man only conditionally (though for Christs sake,) and they are the pardon of sin, and salvation of the Soul, and these God doth confer only upon the Condition of Faith and Repentance. Now I am ready to profess, and that, I sup-

pose, as out of the Mouth of all our Divines, that every one who hears the Gospel (without distinction between Elect and Reprobate) is bound to believe that Christ died for him, so far as to procure both the pardon of his sins, and the Salvation of his Soul, in case he believe and repent. But there are other Benefits which Christ by his Obedience hath merited for us, namely, the Benefit of Faith and Repentance; for it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell, Col. 1. 19. And he hath blessed us with all Spiritual Blessings in Christ, that is, for Christs sake, Eph. 1. 3. And God works in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ: And therefore seeing nothing is more pleasing in Gods sight on our part, then Faith and Repentance, even these also, I should think, God works in us through Jesus Christ: And the Apostle prays in the behalf of the Ephesians (Eph. 6. 23.) for Peace, and Faith, and Love, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, that is, as I interpret it, from God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as an efficient Cause, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, God and Man, as a meritorious Cause thereof. Now I demand, whether this Author can say truly, that it is the constant Opinion of our Divines, that all who hear the Gospel, whether Elect or Reprobate, are bound to believe, that Christ died to procure them Faith and Repentance. Nay, doth any Arminian, at this Day, believe this, or can he name any Arminian that doth avouch this?

Again, Glory and Salvation God doth not will that it shall be the Portion of any one of ripe Years, absolutely, but conditionally, to wit, if he repent and believe. And in case all, and every one, of the World should believe and repent, all, and every one, (how notorious Sinners soever they be found) shall be saved, such is the sufficiency of Christs Merits. I say, this is true, not of them only, who are invited to the Wedding, Mat. 22. Nor of them only to whom St. Peter speaketh, Acts 3. 26. Or of them only, of whom our Saviour speaketh, Mat. 23. 37. But of all, and every one, throughout the World: And it is as true, that none of them shall be saved, if they dye in Impiety and Inpenitency. Thus God himself signifieth to be his will by his Promise, Acts 2. 38, 39. on the one part; and on both parts, Mark 16. 16. And as God signifieth this to be his will, so indeed it is his will according to our Doctrine, and there is no colour of Imposture or Simulation in all this. In like sort, as touching the Grace of pardon of sin, this also God offers unto all that hear the Gospel, but how? not absolutely, but conditionally, in case they believe and Repent; and it is Gods will, that every one who believeth, shall have his sin pardoned; mine that I know, either thinketh or teacheth otherwise, whether he saileth out, either to be Elect or Reprobate; though how to distinguish Men according unto this difference, I know not, I leave that unto God. Now like as we say, God doth signifie his meaning to be, that as many as believe and repent shall have their sins pardoned, and their Souls saved;

So if it can be proved, that there is no such meaning in God, then in my poor Judgment it cannot be avoided; but that God must be found halting in his Offers. But for my part, I acknowledge such a meaning in God, neither have I to this Hour, found any one of our Divines, either by Word or Writing, to have denied this to be the meaning of God.

Again, [Whereas he (Hoar) falsifieth our Doctrine, so as if we said, that God hath decreed at no hand to save them, to whom he promiseth Salvation upon Condition of Faith, this is a notorious untruth, and such as implieth *Ibid.* pag. 277. manifest contradiction. For to say, he hath resolved at no hand to save them, is as much as to say, that he hath resolved to save them on no Condition. But if he hath promised to save them in case they believe, undoubtedly he hath resolved to save them upon Condition of Faith: Onely God's Resolution to save them, is not held in suspense, considering that from Everlasting, he well knew who would believe, and who would not; &c.

Again, It is true, Baptism is ordained, that those which do receive it, may have the Remission of their sins, but not absolutely, but conditionally, to wit, in case they Believe and Repent, as appears both in that place, Acts 2. 38. *Ibid.* pag. 201. and Rom. 4. 11. and Baptism as a Seal doth assure hereof, onely in case they Believe and Repent, and therefore none of Ripe Tears were admitted unto Baptism, until they made Profession of their Faith, and as for Infants, they were also antiently said to be Baptized in Fide Parentum. By all these Passages, quoted Word for Word out of Dr. Twiss, it is as clear, as the Light at Noon-day, that he held the Covenant of Grace to be Conditional, and particularly, that the Promise of Justification, and Pardon of Sin, is Conditional, and that Faith and Repentance, not Faith alone, nor Repentance alone, but Faith and Repentance together are the Condition of it. It is clear also, that he held, as we do, that God by his Special Grace purchased for us by Christ, and given to us for Christ's sake, enables us, and all the Elect, to perform the Condition of Faith and Repentance, and that effectually and infallibly. As for the Non-Elect, who do not perform the Condition, he says the reason, the culpable reason of that is, because they will not: and though it be true also that they cannot, yet that is not a meer Physical, but a moral cannot, which ariseth from the evil disposition of their minds and affections, whereby they will not.

That this was Dr. Twiss his Judgment is evident by these following Testimonies of his quoted out of the same Book. Observe we farther how this Author confounds impotency moral, which consisteth in the corruption of mans powers natural, and impotency natural, which, consisteth in bereaving him of power natural. The Lord tells us by his Prophet Jeremiah, (Cap. 13. 23.) That like as a Blackamore cannot change his skin, nor a Leopard his spots, no more can they do good that are accustomed unto evil. Now if a man taken in stealth shall plead thus before a Judge; My Lord, I beseech you have compassion upon me, for I have so long time inward my hands to pilfering, that now I cannot forbear it, will this be accepted as a good plea to save him from the Gallows. — As for Faith, It is well known that Divines distinguish between *fides acquisita*, and *fides infusa* (Acquired and infused Faith:) That we may call a Faith naturally acquired, which is found in carnal Persons, whether Pagan or Hypocritical. And this (to wit the infused) is a Faith inspired by God's Spirit. The object of each is all one, and a Man may suffer Martyrdom for the one as well as for the other, which manifesteth the pertinacious adherence therunto: And it appears that all Professions have had their Martyrs. Albeit it be not in the power of Nature to believe *fide infusa* (with an inspired Faith) yet it is in the power of nature to believe the Gospel *fide acquisita* (with an acquired Faith,) which depends partly upon a mans Education, and partly upon reason, considering the credibility of the Christian way; by light of natural observations, above all other ways in the World. And when men refuse to embrace the Gospel, not so much because of the incredibility of it, but because it is not congruous to their natural affections, as our Saviour tells the Jews, light came into the World, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. John 3. 19. Is there any reason why their condemnation should be any what the easier for this? Neither have I ever read or heard it taught by any, that men shall be damned for not believing with an infused Faith, which is as much as to say, because

Go & hath not regenerated them; but either because they have refused to believe, or else if they have embraced the Gospel, for not living answerable thereunto; which also is in their power, quoad exteriorem vitam emendationem. As to the outward Reformation of their Life, though it be not in their power to regenerate their wills, and change their hearts, any more than it is to illuminate their minds: Yet I never read that any mans damnation was any whit the more encreased for not performing these acts.

Again, The Man bereaved of his eyes hath a will to read, and consequently it is no fault for not reading. For all sin is in the Will. But it is not so, in not obeying either Law or Gospel. If a Man had a will to obey and believe, but he could not, in such a case it were unreasonable he should be punished. But in the case of disobedience unto God, we speak of, all the fault is in the will, voluntarily and willfully, they neither will obey the one nor the other: Like as they that have accustomed themselves to do evil, cannot do good, as a Blackamoor cannot change his skin, yet with this difference, that man is never a whit the more excusable, or less punishable, for not doing that which is good; not so the Blackamoor for not changing his skin. But such is the shameful issue of them that confound Impotency Moral with Impotency Natural, as if there were no difference, &c.

Again, To the Rule of Law objected by Mr. Hoard. (*That contractus sub conditione impræstabilis nullus æstimatur*) a Contract or Promise made upon a condition not performable by the Party, is esteemed none at all; Twiſs answers thus, [*Conditio impræstabilis*, a Condition not performable; is there such as cannot be performed by reason of Impotency Natural; but the Impotency we speak of, in the case between God and Man, is merely Impotency Moral; to wit, therefore they cannot, because they will not, were it not for the Corruption of their Will, no Power were wanting in Man to Believe and Repent.

Again, Dost thou complain, thou hast no power to believe, but I pray thee, tell me, hast thou any will to believe? If thou neither hast, nor ever hadst any will to believe, what a shameful and unreasonable thing is it, to complain that thou hast no power to believe? St. Paul had a most gracious will, but he found in himself no power to do what he would, but what is the issue of this complaint? To fly in the face of God? Nothing less! But to confess his own wretchedness, and flee unto God in this manner, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? And receiving a Gracious Answer concerning this, concludes with thanks, I thank God through my Lord Jesus Christ: If I have a will to believe, to repent, I have no cause to complain, but to run rather unto God with thanks for this, and pray him to give that power, which I find wanting in me. And indeed this impotency of believing and insidelity, the fruit of Natural Corruption common to all, is merely a moral impotency, and the very ground of it is the Corruption of the Will: Therefore men cannot believe, cannot repent, cannot do any thing pleasing unto God, because they will not, they have no delight therein; but all their delight is Carnal, Sensual, and because they are in the flesh, they cannot please God; and because of the hardness of their hearts, they cannot repent. Sin is unto them, as a sweet Myrror unto an Epicure, which he rolleth under his Tongue. This and much more to this purpose hath Twiſs in his Book against Hoard. And that this was his settled Judgment is evident by what he writes in his defence of the

Doctrine of the Synod of Dort. It is true, that it is not in the power of man to add unto the word the efficacy of God's Spirit, and it is as true that a carnal man hath no desire that God would add the efficacy of his Spirit thereunto. The Discipline of Christ's Kingdom is as Cords and Bonds unto them, they desire to break them, and to cast off the yoke of obedience unto him. And again it is as true that no man is damned for not adding the efficacy of God's Spirit unto his word. They are damned for contemning God's Word, and not hearkning to his Gracious Admonitions; but they could do no other, as this Arminian Antibur intensifies; But what impotency is this? Is it any where else than in their wills? Which this Antibur considers not, nor distinguisheth between impotency natural, and impotency moral; were they willing to hearken hereunto, but could not, then indeed their impotency were excusable; but they please themselves in their obstinate courses; and if they would do otherwise, I make no question, but that they should have no more cause

to complain of their impotency to do that good which they would do, than the servants of God have, yea and holy Paul himself had. Now can you believe (saith our Saviour, John 5. 44.) Here is a certain impotency of believing, which our Saviour takes notice of; but what manner of impotency is it? Observe by that which followeth, (who receive Honour one of another, and regard not the Honour which cometh of God only.) Therefore you hear not my words, because ye are not of God: John 8. 47. This is as true, as the word of the Son of God is true, although this Author sets himself to impugn this kind of Doctrine all along. But without considering, do they deplore this impotency? Doubt the consideration hereof humble them? Nay rather they delight in it, as the Prophet saith, Jerem. 6. 10. Their ears are uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken; Behold the Word of God is as a Reproach unto them, they have no delight in it.

By these Testimonies of Dr. Twiss and more which might be quoted to this purpose, we plainly see that though he doth every where maintain that God by his special discriminating effectual Grace enables the Elect, (but not the non-Elect) to believe, repent, and obey the Gospel, and so to performe the Condition of the Covenant; yet at the same time he declares that the inability of the Non-Elect to believe, repent, and obey, is a meer moral impotency, arising from the ill disposition of their own minds and affections; that therefore they cannot, because they will not, and that if they would they should be able to believe and repent and obey the Gospel. Now though we heartily agree with the Doctor, that it is by the special discriminating effectual Grace of God in Christ Jesus, that the Elect believe, repent and obey the Gospel; and also that the inability and impotency which others are under to do these things, is a moral, and not a meer natural inability and impotence; yet to show that we are far from being Pelagians or Arminians, we must declare to the World, That Dr. Twiss seems sometimes to ascribe more to the Natural Power of an Unregenerate Man without the Grace of God, than we can allow of: This he doth in the foresaid Book in defence of the Doctrine of the Synod of Dort, page 48. Where after he had discoursed of natural and moral impotency, and shewed,

(1.) That the wicked are punished for refusing to believe; that this refusal is the free-act of their wills; and by their natural power they might abstain from this refusal, and might believe with an acquired Faith, as many Unregenerate Men have done. And,

(2.) After he had likewise shewed out of Augustin, That the reason why the wicked do not believe, is because they will not, and that if they would, they might believe, and that since they might believe if they would, it is just with God to punish them for not believing, and,

(3.) After he had shewed out of the same Augustin, That the reason why they will not believe, is either because they do not see the truth and goodness of that which they should believe, or else because it doth not delight them.

(4.) In the fourth place he adventures to go one step further, and of his own head to say, That except the supernatural acts of the Three Theological Vertues, Faith, Hope, and Love, all Acts and Duties inward or outward are natural, and may be performed by a natural man, though not in an acceptable manner, for want of Faith, Hope and Love supernatural. Now (saith he, they are his own very words) suppose that a man were so exact both in natural morality, and in an outward conformity to the means of Grace, as not to fail in any particular, as he hath power to performe any particular hereof naturally; in this case, I say, if there were any such, he should be in the same case with those that are guilty of no sin, but sin original, &c. Upon this passage we observe that the Doctor supposeth it possible for a natural man by the meer power of nature, without any supernatural Grace to be so exact in doing all the Duties which God requires of him, as not to fail in any particular, and so to keep himself free from all actual Sin. He doth not indeed say that there is, or ever was, or ever will be such a Man; but he plainly enough says that it is naturally possible, and supposes it so to be, he supposes it possible for a natural man by the power of Nature, so to live as to be without all actual sin. This we are so far from agreeing to, that on the contrary, we hold it to be naturally impossible for any natural man by natural power, so to live, as to be without all actual sin. For were any original sin in such a Man, would so vigorously put it self forth into act upon the presentation,



presentation of outward objects to his Senses, or the formation of Notions and Ideas of things in his mind, that by his meer natural power he could not possibly hinder all the Sallies and Eruptions of it.

This is the Catholick Faith, and the contrary is pure *Pelagianisme*, which we wonder how it should ever fall from the Pen of Dr. *Twiss*, who was really a hater of *Pelagianisme*. We should never have mentioned this, but to let men know how far we are from *Pelagianisme*, even farther than Dr. *Twiss* was, as to the power of a Natural Man. Indeed we are so far from thinking that a Natural Man by his meer natural powers can live without all actual sin, that we do not believe that a Spiritual Regenerate Man can live so exactly as to keep himself free from all actual sin, although he be furnished and assisted with such a measure of Supernatural Grace, as the Lord doth ordinarily give out unto his own select People. This is the Common Doctrine of the Reformed Churches, which we can demonstrate to be true, and which we firmly believe: Surely then it must be a vile slander cast upon us, that we are so far gone off from the Truth of the Reformed Religion, as that our Cause and the *Pelagians*, is coincident, and that more and worse is feared, which

what it should be, we cannot imagine, unless it be that they fear we will at last renounce Christ and Christianity. But to this we will say with *2 Sam. 16. 12. David*, it may be the Lord will look upon our case, and requite us good for this reviling.

Let. p. 12. Dr. Downname Bishop of Derry, whom our Author also commends in his Letter, shall next come in for a Witness on our behalf; who in his Book of the Covenant of Grace saith, [The promises of the Gospel cannot be applied to any aright, but only to those who have the condition of the promise, which is the justifying Faith: For the Gospel doth not promise Justification and Salvation to all but to those only who have a justifying Faith. Therefore a Man must be endued with justifying Faith, before he can or ought to apply the promises of the Gospel to himself: For as Salvation is promised to them that believe, so damnation is denounced to them that believe not, Mark 16. 16. John 3. 18. 18.]

page 134, 135. Again, No man ought to apply the promise of the Gospel to himself; who hath not the condition of the promise, unless he will perniciously deceive himself. For as he that believeth, shall be saved, so he that believeth not shall be condemned. Again, As we daily sin, so we must daily ask forgiveness, Prayer being the means that God hath ordained to that end

ibid. page 153. Object. Yea, But saith the Papist, ye forsooth have already full assurance of the remission of all your sins, not only past, but also to come. Answ. It is absurd to imagine that sins be remitted before they be committed, and much more, that we be assured they are remitted, before they be either remitted or committed: That indeed were a Doctrine to animate and to encourage Men to sin.

But howsoever the Pope sometimes forgiveth sins to come, yet God doth not: When God justifieth a man, he giveth him remission of sins past, Rom. 3. 25. As for time to come, we teach that although Christ hath merited, and God hath promised remission of sins of all the faithful unto the end of the World; notwithstanding remission of sins is not actually obtained and much less, by special Faith believed until Men do actually believe and repent, and by humble and faithful Prayer renew their Faith and Repentance. For as God hath promised to the faithful all good things: But how? Matt. 7. 7, 8. To them that ask, that seek, that knock. So also remission of sins. Neither is it to be doubted, but that remission of sin, though merited by Christ, though promised by God, though sealed unto us in the Sacrament of Baptisme, is obtained by the effectual Prayer of those who believe and repent, for whom Christ hath merited it, and to whom God hath promised it in his Word, and sealed it by the Sacrament; even as the obtaining of the rain which God had promised, (1 Kings 18. ver. 1, 41.) and the Prophet Elias had foretold; is ascribed to the effectual Prayer of Elias, James, 5. 16, 18.

To Bishop Downname, we add the very Learned and Pious Gatakers Testimony. When *Salazar* the Antinomian had objected and said either place Salvation on a free Election,

or else you make the New Covenant, but an old Covenant, in new terms. Do this, and live? Believe this and live; repent and live; obey and live. Gataker replies, This is frivolous, because it hath been shewed, Salvation free bottom is no way impeached by such conditions as these required; and scandalous, because therein the Apostles Doctrine is not covertly, but directly challenged, as overthrowing and razing the foundation of free Grace. For what is believe on the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved, but believe and live? Or what is repent, that your sins may be done away, but repent and live. Or what is, He is the Author of Salvation to all that obey him, but obey and live. And I demand again, what this amounts unto, whether it be any other than blasphemy, to say, that the Apostles by such their Doctrine, did not place Salvation upon a free bottom, but brought in the old Covenant again in new terms? Sir, Dare you say in your new revealed Mystery, believe not, and yet live; repent not, and yet live; obey not, and yet live?

Again, We may truly say that you and yours are they that either cannot or will not see the Wood for Trees, the conditions on which Salvation by Christ is propounded, though in the Gospel, they do every where occur and offer themselves, will ye, nill ye, to your eyes.

With Gataker we joyn Mr. Ball, who in his Treatise of Faith (recommended by a Preface of Dr. Sibbes) saith, The promise of remission of sins is conditional, and becometh not absolute, until the condition be fulfilled. — This is the word of Grace, Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved. When doth this conditional proposition become absolute? When we believe, what? That our sins are pardoned? No, but when we believe in Christ to obtain pardon, which is the thing promised upon condition of belief.

Again, The privilege of Grace and Comfort which comes to the Soul by believing, must be distinguished from the Condition of the Covenant, which is required on our parts before we can obtain pardon.

Again, We can teach no Faith to Salvation, but according to the Rule of Christ, Repent and believe the Gospel; no remission of sin, but according to the like Rule, (Luke 24. 47. Acts 2. 37, 38.) But Faith seeketh and receiveth pardon as it is proffered in the word of Grace. Repentance is necessary to the pardon of sin, as a condition without which it cannot be obtained, not as a cause why it is given. (Luke 13. 3. 1 John 1. 9. Acts 11. 18.) If Mercy should be vouchsafed to all indifferently the Grace of God should be a bawler to mans sin, &c.

Lastly, We conclude, this head of our defence with the Testimony of the Synod of Dort. We have already shewed that the Geneva Divines in that Synod gave it in under their hands, (and were therein approved by the Synod) That the Covenant of Grace is conditional. We might be large in shewing the like of many others, but we will confine our selves for brevities sake to the Embsdan, Bremen, and English Divines their Suffrages recorded in the Acts of the Synod.

First, The Embsdan Divines in the Synod said, That God required the same conditions from those that were in Covenant with him under the Old and New Testament, to wit, Faith, and the obedience of Faith. Gen. 12. Abraham believed God, and the Apostle in Rom. 4. Teaches that we are saved by the same Faith. Gen. 17. Abraham is commanded to walk before God, and be perfect. The same is every where required of Believers under the new Testament. Here we (1.) See that they affirm the Covenant of Grace hath Conditions in the Plural number. (2.) That Faith and sincere Obedience, walking before God, and being perfect, upright or sincere, were the conditions of it under the Old, and now are the Conditions of it under the New Testament. (3.) That this Doctrine was approved by the Synod of Dort.

Next Martinus one of the Bremen Divines is so clear for the Conditionality of the Covenant, that none who understand what his Judgment was, can doubt of his being on our side. We need not quote his words, they that please may see them in the Acts

*Ibid.* part. 2. page  
136, 137.

*Ibid.* p. 150, 151.

Lastly our own British Divines are clearly for the conditionality of the Covenant of Grace, no body could ever doubt of this, that ever read their *Suffrage* either in Latin or English.

For thus they write, (For howsoever Salvation in the execution thereof, dependeth upon the conditional use of the means, yet the will of God *ellecting* unto Salvation is not conditional, incomplete, or mutable; because he hath absolutely purposed to give unto the Elect both power and will to performe those very conditions, namely Repentance, Faith, Obedience, Perseverance.) By this we see that they taught, not only that Faith is a Condition, but that Repentance, Obedience, and Perseverance are Conditions of the Covenant, which is the whole of what we say, and it was received and approved by the whole Synod of Dort above Seventy years ago. Again, in opposition to, and refutation of the eighth erroneous opinion of the Arminians they write thus, [We do not deny but that there is such a good pleasure of God laid open for revealed in the Gospel, by which he hath decreed to choose Faith as a condition for conferring Salvation, that is, by which he would have the actual obtaining of Salvation, (at least in respect of those which are of ripe years,) to depend upon the condition of foregoing Faith:] And this is that joyful and saving message to be published unto all Nations in the name of Christ. But this is not the very decree of Election properly taken, and so much set forth, or celebrated by the Apostle St. Paul. For that Decree is Active or Practical, ordaining some particular Persons unto Salvation, not disposing of things, or the connexion of things in order to Salvation, and it is confined unto, or terminated upon Humane Creatures themselves, and not upon their qualities, Ephes. 1. 4. He hath chosen us, to wit, men; Rom. 8. Those whom he hath predestinated, to wit, men; Math. 20. Few are chosen; that is, few men. From this passage we observe, (1.) That according to those Learned Divines there is an absolute pleasure and purpose of God that Faith shall be the condition of Salvation in the Covenant of Grace. (2.) That this absolute pleasure and purpose of God, refers to things, and absolutely constitutes a conditional connexion between them, that is, between pardon of Sin and Salvation as the benefit or grace promised, and Faith as the condition, in whomsoever it shall be found. This good pleasure and absolute purpose of God terminating upon, and constituting the conditional connexion of things, is the foundation of the general conditional promises of the Gospel, which we are ordered to preach conditionally to all the world, as we have a Call, (Mark. 16. 15, 16. Rom. 10. 8, 9.) not making any difference between Persons and Persons, as to that matter. But now the Decree of Election, formally and terminatively considered, is quite another thing as to our Conception of it; It is the good pleasure and absolute purpose of God terminating upon particular Persons, singling them out from others, and appointing them to obtain Salvation in such a way, and by such means: And this good pleasure and purpose of God in his time and way according to his word of Promise never fails to have its powerful effect upon those select persons, to make them first gracious, and then glorious for evermore. Again,

In treating of the second Article, their fifth position is this, [In the Church, wherein according to the promise of the Gospel, Salvation is offered to all, there is such an administration of Grace, as is sufficient to convince all Impenitents and Unbelievers, that by their own voluntary default, either through neglect, or contempt of the Gospel, they perish and come short of the benefit offered unto them.] This position they lay down as a Truth, then they proceed to prove it; and thus they begin, [Christ by his Death hath not only established the Evangelical Covenant; but hath moreover obtained of his Father, that wheresoever this Covenant should be published, there also together with it, ordinarily such a measure of supernatural Grace

*Ibid.* art. 2. p. 49, 50. the Church, wherein according to the promise of the Gospel, Salvation is offered to all, there is such an administration of Grace, as is sufficient to convince all Impenitents and Unbelievers, that by their own voluntary default, either through neglect, or contempt of the Gospel, they perish and come short of the benefit offered unto them.] This position they lay down as a Truth, then they proceed to prove it; and thus they begin, [Christ by his Death hath not only established the Evangelical Covenant; but hath moreover obtained of his Father, that wheresoever this Covenant should be published, there also together with it, ordinarily such a measure of supernatural Grace

Grace should be dispensed, or may suffice to convince all Impenitent and Unbelievers of contempt, or at least of neglect, in that the Condition (of the Covenant) was not fulfilled by them. These are their own words, then they prove two things. (1.) That some measure of supernatural Grace is ordinarily administered in the ministry of the Gospel; which they demonstrate by several Testimonies of Scripture.

(2.) That that Grace is sufficient to convince all Impenitent Unbelievers, either of contempt, or at least of neglect, which they demonstrate from John 15. 22. John 3. 19. Heb. 2. 3. Heb. 4. 12. Math. 11. 24. Heb. 6. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8.

And before this their second Position with respect to the Elect, is that *Part* of the special love of God by and for the merit and intercession of Christ, Faith and Perseverance are given unto the Elect, yea and all other things by *Ibid.* page 45. which the condition of the Covenant is fulfilled, and the promised benefit, namely, Eternal Life is infallibly obtained.] This is their position, and they prove it by Rom. 8. 32, 33, 34. and Heb. 8. 10.

Again, In Refutation of the Third erroneous Opinion that Christ's Death hath obtained for all men, Restitution into the state of Grace and Salvation, they both assert the Conditionality of the Covenant; and also at the *Ibid.* Art. 2. p. 61, same time lay the Axe to the Root of Huberianisme, Puccianisme, 62, 63. and Antinomianism or Crispianisme. Their words and Arguments are these following:

1. Reason. Salvation is a thing promised in the New Covenant, neither is it promised but upon the condition of Faith; (whoever believeth, shall be saved,) since therefore all men have not Faith in Christ, under which condition, only Salvation is promised, it is certain that the Death of Christ did not obtain for all, but for the faithful alone, a restoration (absolute) into the state of Grace and Salvation. This they prove from Rom. 5. 1. Rom. 3. and 4. chap. and Gal. 2. 16.

2. Reason. Without faith in Christ, Man remains in the state of Condemnation, John 3. 18. John 3. 36. But they who are restored into the Bosom of Grace, every one of them, have remission of sins, which makes men happy, Psal. 32. 1. Neither do they remain in Condemnation, neither doth the wrath of God remain upon them. They therefore who want Faith, are not restored by the Death of Christ into the state of Grace and Salvation; Since through the Name of Christ, no Man obtaineth remission of sins, except he who believes in him, Acts 10. 43.

Reason 3. If the Death of Christ hath obtained restitution for all, then are they restored either (1.) When Christ from all Eternity was destinated unto Death, which is false; for so no man should be born a child of wrath, neither should Original sin any whit damage mankind, being according to this Opinion forgiven them from all Eternity. — Or, (2.) They were restored in the Person of our first Parents, when the promise concerning the Seed of the woman was proclaimed, which is false. For our first Parents themselves were not restored into the state of Grace, but by Faith in Christ, and consequently neither were their Posterity restored, but in like manner, that is, by Faith. Therefore not all, whether Believers, or Unbelievers are restored. Or, (3.) They were restored, when Christ himself suffered Death upon the Cross; but that is false also, and cannot be, for so no man before that moment should have been restored, which none will grant: Neither are all restored from that time, because without doubt, even at that moment; and afterward the Wrath of God burned hot against some of Christ's Accusers, Condemners, Crucifiers and Mockers.

Thus our Divines argued in the Synod, and their Arguments were approved by the Synod. Now let any man of judgment consider the force of these Arguments, and he will plainly see that they do prove that; no Man, no, not the Elect can be admitted into favour with God, and be justified before he believe, and performe the Condition of the Covenant; as well as that all men are not, and cannot be so dealt with. The Elect themselves, before their Conversion are not absolutely and actually in Grace and favour with God, they are not in a state of Justification and Salvation, because they yet want Faith the Condition of the Covenant, upon which Condition those subsequent blessings of the Covenant are only promised; so that by this we may see the Synod hath in effect before-hand judged between us and the Antinomians, and hath given Sentence according to Scripture on our side.

Lastly, We find that our Divines, in the Synod, declared and proved, that Perseverance in Holy Faith and Obedience, which is the Condition of our obtaining Eternal Salvation, is it self promised absolutely without any proper Condition, yet not so as always, and in all Elect, Justified Persons, to exclude and prevent a partial, temporary Apostacy and Back-sliding. Here then are two things held by them; (1.) That the Perseverance of the Elect, after they are once converted and justified, though it be a Condition of obtaining Eternal Salvation, yet it is promised and given without any other proper Condition. Therefore writing on the Fifth Article,

*Lid. Art. V. pag.*

157, 158.

they reject the erroneous Opinion of the Arminians, That Perseverance is a Benefit offered equally to all the truly Faithful, upon this Condition, namely, If they shall not be wanting unto sufficient Grace; and give their Reasons why they rejected it. (1.) Say they, It is not true, that Perseverance is a Gift onely offered, but not given: For the Scriptures witness, that God doth not onely offer unto his, the Grace of Perseverance, but also, that he gives it them, and puts it into their Hearts: Jer. 32. 40. I will put my fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from me, and John 4. 14. I will give them living water, that they shall not thirst.

Again, It is false, (say they,) that Perseverance is a Grace offered upon Condition, for it is a Gift promised absolutely by God, without any respect to a Condition. The Reason is this, Some Promises of God are touching the End, others touching the Means which conduce to the End. The Promises concerning the End, that is to say Salvation, are conditional. Believe and thou shalt be saved. Be faithful unto death, (that is, persevere,) and I will give thee the Crown of Life. But so far as no Man is able to perform the Conditions, God also hath made most free and absolute Promises to give the very Conditions, which he works in us, that so by them, as by Means, we may attain the End. Deut. 30. 6. And the Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, that thou maiest live. The End here promised, is Life, which the Israelites could never attain, without the performance of the Condition, namely, their Love of God. But here God promiseth absolutely, that he will give unto them this very Condition. Since therefore the Promises of Faith, and Perseverance, in Faith, are Promises concerning the Means, they are wholly to be reckoned among those absolute Gifts, by which God (considering Mans disability, both to attain the End without the Means, and also to perform (or effect) the Means, or Conditions of himself,) doth promise that he will make them able to perform the Conditions. God promiseth Life to those that constantly fear him. The Promise of Life is conditional, but of constant Fear is absolute: I will put my fear in their hearts that they may not depart from me. And lastly, Be it so, that this Gift were conditional, yet it is not offered upon this Condition, if Men will not be wanting to themselves in the entertainment and use of sufficient Grace. — For (1.) It will from this Condition follow, that we do in vain pray to God in the behalf of any Man, that he would give unto them the Gift of Perseverance, because of Course he offers them universal and sufficient Grace, to which, if they themselves will not be wanting, they shall persevere. (2.) This is an idle Condition, for it makes Perseverance to be the Condition of Perseverance. For to persevere, is nothing else, but not to be wanting unto this sufficient Grace. If therefore God offers Perseverance upon this Condition, he offers the same upon Condition of it self.

Thus they shewed, that Perseverance is absolutely promised, and given, without any other proper Condition. Yet for all this, (2.) they do not say, that Perseverance is so promised and given, as to exclude and prevent always a partial, temporary Apostacy and Back-sliding. For we find that discoursing of Perseverance, as it concerns

*Lid. Art. V. pag.*

121, 122, 123, 124,

125.

the Elect, their Third Position is, [ These very same Persons ] thus Regenerated, and Justified, do sometimes, through their own default, fall into heinous sins, and thereby they do incur the Fatherly Anger of God, and they draw upon themselves a damnable Guiltiness, and lose their present access to the Kingdom of Heaven. Then they prove their Position. It is manifest (say they,) by the Examples of David and Peter, that the Regenerate can throw themselves headlong into most grievous sins, God sometimes permitting it, that they may learn with all humility to acknowledge, that, not by their own strength, or doc-



him by Gods Mercy, and they were freed from Eternal Death, and had Life Eternal bestowed upon them. Would they cleave to such sin, and sleep securely therein, Gods Fatherly Anger might against them. Psal. 89. 31. Rom. 2. 9. Besides, they draw upon themselves damnable Guilt, so that as long as they continue without Repentance, in that state, they neither ought, nor can persuade themselves otherwise, than that they are subject to Eternal Death: Rom. 8. 13. If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die. For they are bound in the Chain of a Capital Crime, by the defect wherewith, according to Gods Ordinance, they are subject to Death, although they are not as yet given over to Death, nor about to be given over: (if we consider the Fatherly Love of God,) but are just to be rescued from this sin, that they may also be rescued from the guilt of Death. Lastly, in respect of their present Condition, they lose the fitness which they had of entering into the Kingdom of Heaven, because into that Kingdom, there shall in no wise enter any thing that is defiled. Rev. 21. 27. or that worthy Abomination. For the Crown of Life is not set upon the Head of any, but those who have fought a good fight, and have finished their course in Faith and Holiness. (2 Tim. 4. 8.) He is therefore unfit to obtain this Crown, who ever as yet cleaves to the Works of wickedness.

The Fourth Position is, The unalterable Ordinance of God doth require, that the Faithful, straying out of the right way, must first return again into the way, by a renewed performance of Faith and Repentance, before he can be brought to the end of the way, that is, to the Kingdom of Heaven.

By the Decree of Election, the Faithful are so predestinated to the End, that they are (or along the Kings High-way) to be led to this appointed End, no other ways than by the Means ordained by God. Nor are these Decrees of God, concerning the Means, Manner, and Order of such Events, less fixed and sure, than the Decrees of the End, and of the Events themselves. If any Man therefore walk in a way contrary to Gods Ordinance, namely, that broad way of Uncleanness and Impenitence, (which leads directly down to Hell,) he can never come by this Means to the Kingdom of Heaven, yea, and if Death should overtake him, standing in this By-path, he cannot but fall into Everlasting Death. This is the constant and manifest Voice of the Holy Scripture, Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish, Luke 13. 3. Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters. They shall inherit the kingdom of God. 1 Cor. 6. 9-10. They are, deceived therefore, who think that the Elect, mallowing in such Crimes, and so dying, must, notwithstanding, needs be saved through the force of Election. For the Salvation of the Elect is sure indeed, God so decreeing: But without (by the Decree of the same our God) it is not otherwise sure, than by the way of Faith, Repentance, and Holiness, Heb. 12. 14. Without holiness no man shall see God. The foundation of God standeth sure, — And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity, 2 Tim. 2. 19.

Again their Fifth Position is, that in the mean time, between the Guilt of a grievous sin, and the Renewed Act of Faith and Repentance, such an Offender stands, by his own desert to be condemned; by Christs Merits, and Gods Decree. Ibid. Art. V. pag. to be acquitted; but actually absolved he is not, until he hath obtained 126, 127.

pardon by Renewed Faith and Repentance. And for Proof of this Position, they say in Page 128. [The Father of Mercies hath set down this Order, That the Act of Repentance must go before the Benefit of Forgiveness, Psal. 32. 5. Ezek. 18. 27.] Thus those Excellent Divines, and Judicious, Faithful Ministers of Christ: By all which, it is clear as the Sun, That the Synod of Dort, taught the conditionality of the Covenant, and held Faith, Repentance, sincere Obedience, and Perseverance to the End, to be the indispensably necessary Conditions of obtaining Eternal Salvation, and therefore if there happen to be a partial Intermittion of sincere Evangelical Obedience, for a time, by Christians falling into heinous wilful sins, there must be a renewing of Faith and Repentance, and a returning to their Obedience again, before they can obtain the pardon of those Sins, and the Eternal Salvation of their Souls; which is all that we hold in this matter.

And it is asserted, explained, and loudly proved, by the most Reverend and Judicious Divines of the Synod of Dort, in another Book of Discussions, these

These Words, *And Opera sunt necessaria ad Justificationis statum retinendum, & conservandum, non ut causas, &c.* that is, *Good Works are Habit. &c.* necessary to retain, and preserve the state of Justification, not as causes of themselves, effect, produce, or merit this Preservation, but as Means or Conditions, without which God will not preserve the Grace of Justification in Man.

And here may be reckoned up the same Works which we mentioned in the foregoing Conclusion: For as no Man receives that general Justification, which frees from the Guilt of all former sins, unless Repentance, Faith, a Purpose to lead a New Life, and other Actions of that nature, concur: So no Man retains a state free from Guilt, with respect to following sins, but by means of the same Actions, of believing in God, calling upon God, mortifying the flesh, continually repenting and grieving for the sins that are continually committed. The Reason why all these things are necessarily required on our part, is this, because these things cannot be always absent, but their contraries will begin to be present, which are repugnant to the Nature of a justified Man: For if you take away Faith in God and Prayer, there succeeds unbelief, and contempt of God's Name: If you take away the endeavour of mortification, and the exercise of Repentance, there breaks in upon the Man, predominant Lusts, and Sins, wasting the Conscience. Therefore because it is not God's will, that Men, who are Unbelievers, obstinate, carnal, should enjoy the benefit of Justification, he requires continual Works of Faith, Repentance, and Mortification; by whose presence, are thrust, as it were, out of Doors, and driven far away, Unbelief, Obstinacy, Security, and other Poisons of justifying Grace; and also of particular sins, there is a particular pardon obtained. Hence Paul saith, (Rom. 8. 13.) If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: And Heb. 3. 12. Take heed, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God: We do not therefore think, that the Act itself of believing, repenting, and mortifying the flesh doth effect, or merit the conservation of justifying Grace; because all these things are done by us faintly and imperfectly, sometimes also, through the Prevalency of some great Temptation, they are, as it were, choked and oppressed; but we say, that God himself, of his free Mercy, preserves the Regenerate in a state of Grace and Salvation, whilst they walk in these ways. As therefore for the preservation of Natural Life, it is necessarily required, that a Man carefully avoid Fire, Water, Precipices, Poisons, and other things which destroy the Health of the Body; so for the preservation of Spiritual Life, it is necessarily required, that a Man avoid Unbelief, Impenitency, and other things that are destructive, and contrary to the Salvation of Souls; which cannot be avoided, unless the opposite and contrary Actions be exercised. But these Actions do not preserve the Life of Grace properly and of themselves, by touching (or producing) the very effect it self of preservation, but improperly and by accident, by excluding and removing the cause of destruction.

Thus we have at large refuted the Authour of the Letter, his Second Error against the Purity of Christian Faith; and have fully and clearly proved the Covenant of Grace to be Conditional. This we have done, first, by clear Scripture: Secondly, by certain and evident Reason grounded upon Scripture: Thirdly, by Testimonies of Orthodox Divines, and First, by Testimonies of the Antient Doctors of the Primitive Church: Secondly, by Testimonies of Divines of the Reformed Churches, both at Home and Abroad; and particularly, by the Testimony of the Divines of the Famous Synod of Dort: Whence it is as clear as the Sun, that we preach no new Arminian Gospel, in this great Point of the Covenant of Grace; and consequently, that the Authour of the Letter is a false Witness in Matter of Faith, who hath proclaimed us to the World, to be Preachers of a new Arminian Gospel, on the account of our Doctrine in the point of Justification.

If after all this, he should say, that though we have proved the Covenant to be conditional, and Faith to be the receptive applicative condition of it; yet we have not proved that Faith justifies as a Condition; We Answer, That look by what place of Scripture he shall ever be able to prove that Faith justifies as an Instrument; and a hand by the same shall we prove that Faith justifies as a receptive applicative condition. For (as we said before) we take a receptive applicative Condition, and a not a causal Instrument to be one, and the same thing would the Witnesses of Divines before us. And in this

sense (which alone is justifiable) we hold Faith to be both an Instrument and a Condition with respect to Justification. And if that will please our Author, we shall grant him that Faith is a hand, and not only a hand, but an eye and a mouth too; an eye to look unto Christ crucified, John 3. 14, 15. John 6. 40. Mat. 23. 22. And a mouth to eat and drink, and feed on his Crucified Flesh and Blood, John 6. 35, 50, 51, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58.

We shall conclude this Answer with the Testimony of Two Learned and Wiser Men than our Author seems to be. The first is the Reverend Mr. Lugin, a Worthy Judicious Congregational Minister in his Life of Faith, printed above Thirty years ago. For the question about the Interest of Faith in our Lukan's Life of Justification, whether it justify in an Instrument, or in a Condition. I Faith. p. 24, 25. think (saith he) it deserves not half the words that have been used about it, they are both of them School-terms, and not found in the Scripture, and should not therefore disturb the peace of the Church, especially seeing both Parties at variance, are agreed in the thing, but not in the formal notion, under which they do conceive it; and I think both sides are so far agreed, that Faith may be called an Instrument, allowing much impropriety of speech, and that it may be called a Condition, while we thereby do not suppose any such thing in merit. Thus Mr. Lugin. Now we heartily accept of this expedient, for the calming of the Tempest which the Letter hath raised. We will never desire the Author to call Faith a meritorious condition, (for we never called it so our selves,) if he will grant us that it is but improperly an Instrument of Justification.

The other is the Learned Turretin, that famous Calvinist Professor of Divinity lately at Geneva, who writes thus, *Carum non docet querendum putamus, an fides instrumentum, notionem induat in hoc negotio, &c.* But we do not Turretin. Inquit. think that it is curiosity to be enquired after, whether Faith put on part, 2. loc. 16. the notion of an Instrument in this matter of Justification; or likewise of quest 7. p. 737. a Condition, as it seems to some men. For nothing blunders, but both notions may be ascribed to it. Wouldst, Condition be not taken for that, in consideration whereas God justifies Man in the Covenant of Grace; after the manner that works were the Condition of Justification in the Legal Covenant? For in this sense, it cannot be called a condition, unless we come over to the Socinians and Arminians, who will have Faith or the Act of believing to be 'accepted' by God for perfect Righteousness, which we have but now refused: But taking the word Condition in a large sense for all that which is required on our part to obtain that benefit, whether it have the notion of a cause properly so called, or only of an instrumental cause; for as this Condition hath the relation of an Instrument, so that Instrument hath the nature of a Condition on our part, without which Justification cannot be obtained. Thus Turretin to which we fully agree, except that we think he gives too much to Faith in conceiving it to be an instrumental cause of Justification, yet since he says that it is no cause properly so called, it follows necessarily that it is not properly an instrumental cause; and so hath no proper causal influence upon the act of Justification; and if so then it is but improperly an instrument, as Mr. Lugin saith, and so the whole Controversie comes to nothing but a strife about the propriety, or impropriety of a word; which Turretin plainly saw, and therefore confessed that Faith is so an Instrument, as to be a Condition, and so a Condition as to be an Instrument of Justification: And taking the word Instrument in a moral sense, for a means of receiving the benefit of Justification for Christ's sake only, we do unreservedly affirm, as Turretin doth, that a sincere Faith is both the Instrument and Receptive Condition of Justification.

Of his Third Error, That there is no Real Change, no Holy Disposition, or Qualification, no Good or Holy thing wrought in, or done by Man in order to, and before Justification; That Faith is not so much as a Qualification of the Person to be justified, and that Repentance is not in order before pardon of Sin.

**H**IS Third Error against the Purity of our Christian Faith is, That the Lord doth not by preventing Grace prepare, dispose, and fit his People for their Justification by and for the Righteousness of Christ imputed to them, but that his just saving work towards them and upon them, is their Justification by Christ's imputed Righteousness. That this is his Opinion, is evident from his own words. For in page 2, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 25, 26, 30, 31, 32.

Error 3.

He denies, That there can be any qualification in us, that any real change is wrought upon us, that any condition is required of us in order to our Justification; he will not so much as admit of Repentance as a dispositive Condition in order thereto; and often finds fault with us for holding Faith to be a Qualification or the Condition of Justification, though he knew well enough that we hold it to be only the receptive, applicative Condition of Christ, and his Righteousness in order to our being justified thereby. Now that this Opinion is Erroneous, and against the purity of our Christian Faith we shall prove. (1.) By Scripture. (2.) By Reason agreeable to Scripture. (3.) By the Testimony of our most Famous Orthodox, Protestant Divines. But before we come to our Proofs, we premise a few things to give light unto what shall follow: As, (1.) That we hold the priority of any preparation, disposition, qualification, or condition before Justification, no farther than is necessary to verifie the Expressions of Holy Scripture concerning them. (2.) We hold that they proceed from the Grace of God. (3.) That that Grace is from Jesus Christ by the supernatural influences of his Holy Spirit. (4.) That some of those things whereby the Spirit of Christ prepares and disposes Souls before they be justified, are such as by the Constitution and Ordination of God have a necessary inseparable connexion with Justification, they are dispositions or qualifications (*sine quibus nunquam est cum quibus semper justificamur*.) without which we are never, and with which we are always justified; of this sort is Effectual Calling, and what is commonly called Regeneration; or that seminal abiding Principle of Spiritual Life, which is communicated unto us in Effectual Calling, and the new Birth together with the first vital actions of that Principle in Faith and Repentance. That Seminal Principle of Spiritual Life, with its first Vital Acts of Faith and Repentance, doth according to our Judgment, so prepare, and dispose, and qualifie the Soul for Justification, that it is always inseparably connected with them according to the Word and Promise of God, and it is never in any case without them; and let it be always remembered, that in our Opinion Actual Faith qualifies us as a receptive Condition of Christ and his Righteousness. But we think also, that there are other dispositions antecedent to Justification which have not such a necessary Connexion with Justification, and yet they are from God's Spirit too. (5.) That the said Seminal Principle of Spiritual Life, with its first Vital Acts of Faith and Repentance which are in order before Justification, and upon which Justification always follows, is the first beginning of Holiness and may well be called Initial Sanctification; for it is the Holy Thing first begotten in us by God's Word and Spirit, it is the first forming of Christ in us, and it is the Holy Root, or Seed, out of which grows our Progressive Sanctification, through the Influences and Operations of the Holy Spirit, given us after Justification, to dwell in us, and to abide with us for ever.

These Things premised, we shall prove, first by Scripture, that it is an Error to deny that there is any real change in us, that there can be any Qualification, or Disposition wrought in us by the Grace of Christ antecedently, (at least in order of Nature,) to our Justification by the imputed Righteousness of Christ. For doth not the Scripture expressly put Effectual Calling before our Justification? Rom. 8. 30. Whom God called, them

*them be also justified?* Now it is confessed, that it is an inward Effectual Calling that is there spoken of; and that such a Calling makes a real change in the Persons so called. But so it is that this Calling is by the Spirit of God put before Justification. Again, in *Heb. 10. 16, 17.* there we have the Order of God's bestowing on his Select People the Blessings of the New Covenant. *This is the Covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.* Here we see, that the Lord according to his Covenant, first writes his Laws in the Hearts of his People, (which cannot be without some real change wrought on them, and some Holy Principle put into them;) Secondly, Their Sins and Iniquities he remembers no more; and that is, he Justifies them, for pardon of sin is an essential part of Justification, and is put for the whole, by a Form of Speech usual enough in the Scriptures of Truth. Further, our Saviour himself gives us plainly to understand, that this is the order of his dispensing his Saving Grace, *Mark 4. 12. Left at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.* In which Words our Lord plainly intimates, that the sins of the unbelieving Jews were not forgiven them, that is, they were not justified, because they were not converted; and that whomsoever he pardons and justifies, he first converts them. And sure Conversion imports a real change, and a Principle of Grace and Holiness implanted in the Souls of the Converted. This is yet clearer from the Words of our Lord to Paul, recorded by *Luke, Acts 26. 17, 18. I send thee unto the Gentiles, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, &c.* By forgiveness of sins is meant Justification, because forgiveness of sins is an essential part of Justification; before the Gentiles could attain to this Justification, consisting in the forgiveness of their sins, their eyes were to be opened, and they were to be turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Is it not then self-evident, that the Gentiles were to be really changed from what they had been in former times, and that they must be renewed, and become new Creatures, before they could obtain the Blessing and Benefit of pardon of sin, and Justification? It is a wonder to us, that any Man should doubt of this Matter, who believes the Scripture, and considers the form of Words used there by the Holy Writer, which plainly sets forth the Justification of the Gentiles as an End, and their Conversion from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, as a Means to attain that End. Now the Means is always in execution before the End: Consequently, Conversion is, and must be before Justification. And if so, then there is a real change in the Soul before Justification; the Person to be justified is prepared, disposed, and qualified by converting Grace, in order of nature, at least before he be justified: And till he be so changed by converting Grace, he is not capable of being justified, according to Gods Order of dispensing Saving Grace unto his People. This our Authour saw well enough, *Let. pag. 16.* when he quoted *Gal. 2. 16. to prove that a Man is to believe, that he may be justified.* For that plainly shews, that Faith is a Means to obtain Justification, and all the World knows, that the Means is always first in execution (as hath been said) before the End be thereby obtained. Now we demand, if a Man must have Faith before he be justified, must there not be a real change in him, must he not be changed from being an Unbeliever, to be a Believer, and must he not also be initially sanctified? Is not true Faith a Holy Virtue, and doth it not denominate the subject of it, to be so far holy, as he is a true Believer? Peter saith, that sincere Faith is a precious thing, *2 Pet. 1. 7.* and *Jude v. 20.* affirms that our Faith is a most holy faith, and it is true, both of the object of our Faith, the things which we believe; and of our Faith it self, the Habit and Act, whereby we do believe, both are holy: And how can it be but Faith must be holy, since it is one of the fruits of the Spirit, *Gal. 5. 22.*? And surely nothing but what is holy, can be a Fruit of the Holy Spirit. From all which we may confidently conclude, that something which is holy, is wrought in us, and



and by us, before we be *Justified*, for it is wrought in us; and by us, that we may be *Justified*. Thus we learn from Scripture, that by preventing, converting Grace there is a real change wrought in the Soul before we be *Justified*, that that change is from falsehood to truth, from evil to good, and that thereby the Person to be justified of an *unholy Unbeliever* becomes an *holy Believer*, and so is a Subject capable of being immediately justified by Christ's Righteousness imputed to him upon his conversion, and penitent believing. And here we might further demonstrate, that there are, through Grace, some holy Dispositions wrought in the Soul before Justification, by all those Scriptures that put Repentance before Remission of Sins; but this we have done already, when we proved sincere Repentance to be a dispositive Condition of Justification. Therefore we pass from this First, to our Second Head of Arguments.

Secondly, We prove by Reason agreeable to Scripture, that it is an Error to deny that there is any real change; that there can be any holy qualification, or Disposition, wrought in us by the Grace of God, antecedently to our Justification.

Reason 1. First we reason thus: Faith is a Condition of Justification, as we have proved at large, therefore it may well be a qualification of the Person to be justified; and we much wonder, that our Author should boldly deny the possibility of any such qualification. For it is left to be a Qualification, than to be a Condition: If then Faith be a Condition, it may much more be a Qualification. And that for Faith to be a Qualification is less than to be a Condition, is hence evident, because Faith, as the Gift of God, without any Act of ours, may be a Qualification; but to make it a proper Condition, it must be our own free Act receiving Christ and his Righteousness, though produced by the strength of God's Special Grace. Now it is plainly less for us to be the Subjects only passively receiving the Gift of Faith, than to be the Agents freely producing the Act, and performing the Condition of Faith. Although then our Author might seem to have some Reason to doubt, whether Faith be the proper Condition of the Covenant, with respect to Justification; yet we cannot imagine why he should deny, that it can possibly be a Qualification of the Person to be justified, for it is very easily conceivable, that it may be such a Qualification, as it is a Grace given unto, and wrought in the Person to be justified, on purpose that he may be thereby qualified for the great and blessed Privilege of Justification. What impossibility is there in all this? That God should constitute, and ordain, that none should ever be justified by Christ's Righteousness, but those that are so qualified; and that Faith shall be the Qualification? And then because no Man can by his natural power qualify himself with this Faith, that God for Christ's sake should by his Spirit give Saving Faith unto all his Select People, and special Favourites, and thereby qualify them for Justification? We can see no Shadow of Repugnancy and Impossibility, but that God may do this if he please. And when he hath done it, when he hath qualified a Man with faith, he most certainly hath a Qualification for the Benefit of Justification. And this is so far from darkening the Glory of God's free Grace in Christ, that on the contrary, it greatly sets it forth, and illustrates it, that God will not only freely promise Justification, through Christ, unto all that are qualified with true faith; but that for Christ's sake he freely gives them that faith, and doth himself qualify them therewith. The like we say of Repentance, it is a Qualification of God's own ordaining, and of God's own giving. Nor doth Faith and Repentance their being Conditions, hinder their being Qualifications, for they may be, and are both. All that we have hitherto ascribed to Repentance in order to Justification, is to be a dispositive Condition of the Subject, and that is the same thing with a qualifying Condition, and a qualifying Condition is a Qualification. We have indeed given more to faith, for according to the Scripture we have owned it to be the only receptive, applicative Condition of Justification, which is more than to be, either a meer Qualification, or a meer Condition; for neither is Qualification, nor Condition, merely as Qualification, and as Condition, receptive and applicative of Christ and his Righteousness unto Justification. To be so receptive and applicative is not essential.

essential to the general notion of a Condition; but to the *special* notion of such a condition. And yet this receptive applicative nature of Faith is such a *special condition*; doth not at all hinder it from being a qualification of the Person to be justified. For the same Faith in different respects is capable of different Notions: Or if any should doubt of that, (without just reason we think) to satisfy them we may well say (what is a great truth) that the habitual Seminal Principle of Faith is a qualification of the Person to be justified; and that the actual Exercise of Faith is the receptive applicative Condition of justification. This is our first Reason.

2. Reason. The seminal abiding Principle of Faith is a holy disposition of the Soul whereby it is inclined and fitted to elicit and produce the Acts of Faith. This is clear, because it is in a special manner the gift of a Holy God, and the fruit of his Holy Spirit, who cannot be the Author of any Seed, Disposition, Inclination, or Habit in the Soul of Man, but what is good and Holy. But now that Seminal abiding Principle of Faith is before justification. This is clear as the Sun, because it is before the Act of that Faith whereby alone we are said to be justified; and that it is before the justifying act of faith, we thus demonstrate. That which concurs to the producing of the Act is before the act, since it is in part the cause of the act, and the cause as such must always be in order of Nature at least, before the effect, and it implies a contradiction that it should be otherwise. But the Seminal abiding Principle of Faith, concurs to the producing of the Act of justifying Faith, for it is given unto us for that end that it may fit us for, incline us to, and help us in acting. Therefore it is before the Act of justifying Faith, and consequently before justification it self. Here then we have found a Holy Seed and Principle put by God into the Soul before justification. And therefore it is utterly false which the Letter saith, that there neither is nor can be any good or holy thing in the Soul, or any real change wrought on the Soul before justification.

3. Reason. The Act of Justifying Faith is a good and holy thing, since it is the effect of God's Holy Spirit, and the first Fruit of the fore-said Holy Seed of Faith in the Soul: But so it is that even according to our Authors own Principles the Act of Faith is before justification. For (as was observed before) he says out of Gal. 2. 16. *We believe that we may be justified*; and if so, then it is evident that our believing is in order of Nature at least, before we be justified. (2.) He holds that Faith is the *Instrumental cause of justification*, and lays great stress upon that Notion, as if it were the great fundamental of his Religion; he likewise finds great fault with us for not holding with him that Faith is the Instrumental cause of justification. Now according to this Opinion of his, he cannot avoid the placing of the Act of Faith before justification, because it is the Act of Faith that receives Christ and his Righteousness, and that is the instrumental cause of justification. But all the World knows that every proper cause (as an instrumental cause is in its kind) is in order of Nature before its effect: Either then some holy good thing is in us before justification, or Actual Faith is no holy good thing; and his instrument wherewith he makes such a noise is good for nothing, but to blow the Coals of Strife and Contention.

4. Reason. Before a Man can be justified by Faith, there must be a real and holy change in him, because of an Unbeliever he must become a Believer, and that cannot be without a real change, and a holy one too. Now that a Man from being an Unbeliever must come to be a Believer in Christ before he can be justified by Faith in Christ, is self-evident, for how can a Man be justified by Faith in Christ, who yet hath no Faith in Christ, he must then have Faith, before he can be justified by Faith. But how shall he get this Faith? Can he get Faith, whilst he still remains in Unbelief that is impossible. For Unbelief either signifies not believing, or it signifies positive disbelieving; and (1.) If it signify not believing, it stands in a contradictory opposition to believing; and contradictions are utterly inconsistent. Can a Man believe in Christ, and not at all believe in Christ at the same time? We hope our Authors will not be so ridiculous as to go about to reconcile contradictions.

(2.) If Unbelief signifie positive disbelieving, disbelieving in power and prevalency, then it stands in a contrary opposition to believing, and two contraries in power and prevalency are likewise utterly inconsistent in the same subject at the same time. A Man that is in the very Act of positive disbelief; and under the power and prevalency of it, cannot possibly have an actual Faith in Christ at that time. Therefore that an Unbeliever may get actual Faith in Christ and be justified by that Faith, he must of necessity be changed, really and effectually changed; he must be changed from being an Unbeliever, to be a Believer; he must come off from his sin of not believing, or of disbelieving, unto the practice of his Duty of believing in Christ that he may be justified by Faith; But this cannot possibly be without a real change; nay this coming off from the sin of Unbelief, to the Duty of Believing is a real change, and a holy change too, therefore there is and must be a real holy change in Man in order of Nature at least before his Justification by Faith in Christ. This is

as certain and evident, as that Two and Two make Four. Yet our  
*let. page 30.* Authour finds fault with us for making it a part of our new Scheme that there must be a real change in a man, that he must be changed from his Unbelief, that he may come to Christ by Faith for Justification. And

elsewhere he says, That it is the experience of every Believer, that every  
*page 11.* one who believeth on Jesus Christ, acts that Faith as the chief of Sinners: And if so, then it follows by necessary consequence, that every one who believes on Christ, acts that Faith as an Unbeliever, for according to him unbelief is the chiefest sin, so he writes expressly, That Un-

*page 13, 16.* belief is the most provoking to God, and the most damning to many of all sins. Unbelief then is the chiefest sin; and if so, certainly the Unbeliever must be the chiefest Sinner, and the Believer who acts his Faith as the chief of Sinners must act his Faith as an Unbeliever: And that is a very odd way of acting Faith, to believe as an Unbeliever. Yet no man can help it, for if our Authors Doctrine be true, it must be so, and cannot be otherwise, because it is that which the experience of all Believers witnesseth unto; and as he writes, *page 24.* The Believer or Acceptor of Christ, in the very act of believing or accepting of Christ, expressly disclaims all things in himself, but sinfulness and misery: And if he do so, then he disclaims, that is, renounces his Faith it self in the very act of believing. He doth not disclaim his Unbelief, for that is sin; nor doth he disclaim the conceit of meriting Justification by his Faith, for that is a sinful conceit: But he disclaims his Faith it self, unless his Faith be either sinfulness or misery; for he disclaims all things in himself, but sinfulness and misery: These two, to wit, Sinfulness and misery, are the only things which he doth not disclaim: Whence it follows necessarily, that he disclaims his belief it self in the very act of believing; and so by this means he is enabled to believe as an Unbeliever. This is (if may be) one of our Authours deep Mysteries, for which his Proselytes admire him, and hug his Letter. And we confess there is no such deep Mystery as the Mystery of contradictory Non-sense. But if every one who believes, doth believe as the chief of Sinners, and so believes as an Unbeliever, and as one that disclaims all true and saving Faith, we would know how it comes to pass that all the Unbelievers in the World do not believe; one would think that they might all easily believe with such a Faith as is acted by a Man (under that reduplicating *quatenus*) as an Unbeliever, and which, in the very act of believing renounceth all saving belief, even every thing but Sin and Misery. Of old no Man was received into the Christian Church, and accounted a Christian, unless he first disclaimed and renounced his sins; but now it seems there is a great alteration in the state of Christianity; for a man cannot at this day be a Christian, unless he disclaim (or which is all one renounce) his Christian Faith, and that too with an exception of not disclaiming his sins. If this be the only way to be a Christian, one would think that all the Jews, Turks, and Heathens in the World might easily be Christians, for they can easily believe with a Faith, that in the very act of it, renounces

renounces and disclaims Faith, but not sin. But if our Author say that every true Christian must believe in Christ with a sincere and saving Faith, which Unbelievers have not, and yet at the same time he must act his Faith as an Unbeliever, and in the very act of Faith, he must disclaim his Faith, but not his Sin of Unbelief; and that there must be no real change in him from Unbelief to Faith, till he have Faith, and have acted his Faith as aforesaid, and be justified by such an Act of Faith; and then a real change passes upon him in order of Nature after his justification; but not before. We answer, That this is contradictory Non-sense, and at this rate no man can be a Christian till he hath made both ends of a contradiction meet, and hath verified both parts of a contradiction in his own Person; no man can be a Christian that is really changed from being an Unbeliever to be a Believer; no, he cannot be a Christian till he be both an Unbeliever and Believer in predominant degrees at the same time, without any real change from what he was by Nature: the plain English of this is that according to the Principles of our Author laid down in his Letter, no Man can ever be a good Christian at all, for the thing is impossible, because it implies a manifest contradiction. Yet we must be so charitable as to think that our Author hath indeed greatly mistaken in the expressing of his mind in his Letter; but that really he doth not believe those things himself. We hope he is of a more Orthodox Faith, and are willing to impute it to some inadvertency and inconsiderateness in the hasty writing of his Letter. We think he would or should have said that every one who believes on Jesus Christ, acts that Faith, as one who thinks himself to have been formerly before his Conversion and Faith, a chief of Sinners, or one of the first rank of great Sinners. But doth not think himself to be still in the same state of Unregeneracy and Unbelief; for if he think so of himself after that is converted and is actually believing on Christ, most certainly he thinks amiss whatever our Author say to the contrary; for he thinks falsely of himself, and sins in so thinking. Our Author talks confidently of that which he doth not know, to wit, the experience of every Believer, for certainly he was never acquainted with the experiences of the thousandth part of Believers that are in the Christian Church at this day. Can he then say in Faith that it is the experience of every Believer that he acts his Faith as one who in former times hath been as great a Sinner, and hath done as much dishonour to God, and as much mischief to the Church and to the World, as the present King of France? But whatever he say or think of Believers; we are persuaded that true Believers are taught, of God, to be humble, so to be wise in acting their Faith; wiser (we are confident) than that every one of them should think himself to be so great a Sinner as that he hath done as much dishonour to God, and mischief to the Church of Christ, as Lewis the Fourteenth has done, and still continues to do. Again when he says, that a Believer and acceptor of Christ in the very act of believing and accepting, expressly disclaims all things in himself, but Sin and Misery; we think he should have said that he either expressly, or implicitly, formally or virtually in the very act of Believing disclaims all things in himself as being of and from himself, but Sin and Misery, which are indeed of and from himself, and he takes the shame and blame thereof upon himself; but as for his Faith, or any good disposition or qualification that is in him, he ascribes it all to the free Grace of God, and gives God all the Glory of it: And after the same manner, in the very act of believing, in order of Nature before he be justified, he virtually acknowledges to God's Glory, that by his Grace he hath wrought a real Holy Change in his Soul, and of a blind, proud Unbeliever, hath made him an understanding, humble Believer according to that, 1 John 5. 20. We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true.

Reason. 5. Fifthly and lastly. The Seminal vital principle of justifying Faith is seated in the heart, and the first vital act of it comes from the heart, Rom. 10. 10. With the heart man believes unto Righteousness. We demand then concerning the first vital act of justifying Faith, either it comes from a renewed Heart, or an unrenewed

Heart,

Heart, a Regenerate Heart, or an Unregenerate Heart, a Heart of Flesh, or an Heart of Stone; or if it come not from either of these, then it must come from a *third*, that is from a Heart that is neither renewed nor unrenewed, neither regenerate, nor unregenerate, neither of Flesh, nor of Stone. But now,

(1.) The first vital act of Justifying Faith cannot come from a Heart that is neither renewed, nor unrenewed, neither regenerate, nor unregenerate, for there is no such Heart in any Man, nor indeed can there be any such Heart: For renewed, and not at all renewed, regenerate, and not at all regenerate, are contradictions which admit of no medium. Every Heart of Man then in the whole World must be one of these, but cannot be both at once, nor any *third thing* distinct from both; for there is no middle between the two, between renewed; and not at all renewed, &c. Since then, every Heart of Man in the World cannot be both renewed, and not at all renewed at the same time, nor yet be any third thing, but must be either one or other,

(2.) We say in the second place, That the first vital act of Justifying Faith cannot come from an Heart not at all renewed, nor regenerate. For a vital act of Justifying Faith is too good and precious Fruit to grow upon the corrupt Tree of a Heart wholly unrenewed and unregenerate. Our Saviour in *Math. 7. 16. 17. 18.* give us to understand, that we may with as much reason expect to gather Grapes of Thorns, or Figs of Thistles, as that a vital act of precious justifying Faith should come from a Heart that is altogether unregenerate and unrenewed. It remains then in the third place, that since the first vital act of justifying Faith cannot come from a Heart that is altogether unrenewed and unregenerate, that is all stony, hard, and obstinately bent unto evil; It must of necessity come from a Heart that is at least partly renewed and regenerate, partly Flesh, or tender and pliable to the Will of God? And from this it follows unavoidably, that there must be a real, holy change wrought in the Heart of Man before his justification by faith; for the Heart of Man cannot possibly be renewed and regenerated either in part, or in whole, without some real holy change wrought in it; but it is renewed and regenerated in part at least in order of Nature, before the first vital act of justifying faith; as hath been proved; and that first vital act of faith is in order of Nature before justification by faith; therefore there is and must be some real holy change wrought in the Heart before justification by faith. From all which it is evident that the Opinion of our Author is erroneous, and against the purity of our Christian faith, to wit, that there is no real change, no holy disposition or qualification before justification by faith: And that on the contrary there is and must be a real change of the Heart, there are and must be several holy dispositions and qualifications wrought in the Soul by the Word and Spirit of the Lord, before we can be justified by faith, and our sins can be actually and absolutely forgiven us. This we have clearly proved both by Scripture: and by Reason agreeable to Scripture.

Now in the *Third and Last* place, we shall prove it by the Testimony of famous and orthodox Protestant Divines: We begin with Calvin, who (as was shew'd before) in his Commentary on *Ezek. 18. v. 23.* saith, *(Præcedit veniunt penitentia, quemadmodum hic dicitur.)* That Repentance goes before pardon of sin, as it is said in *doe.* in this place of Scripture. Whence we observe, (1.) That it is not a nice legal Repentance, such as may be in an unconverted Man that he speaks of; but it is an Evangelical saving Repentance; for first, it is a Repentance that consists in turning from sin, *v. 23.* yea from all sin in Heart and Affection, *v. 21.* Secondly, in doing the whole known will of God, that is, doing it in desire and resolution, *v. 21.* But a meer legal Repentance doth not consist in these things, nor hath it so good an effect upon the Soul. Thirdly, it is a Repentance to which Pardon and Life is promised through Christ. But no such thing is promised to a meer legal Repentance: Therefore it is not a Legal, but an Evangelical Repentance, that Calvin there speaks of. (2.) We observe, that if in Calvin's Judgment a true Evangelical Repentance goes before pardon of sin and Justification,



Justification, then a true justifying faith goes before it and. For Calvin was clearly of the opinion, that faith goes before a true Evangelical Repentance, in so much that he saies, (*Quibus videtur fidem potius precedere poenitentiam, quam ab ipsa manare vel proferri tanquam fructum ab arboribus, nunquam vis-gem suam cognita.*) That they never knew the power of Repentance, who think that it is rather before Faith, than that it flows, or proceeds from Faith as Fruit from a Tree.

These Words of Calvin manifestly shew, that he held faith to be in order of nature before true Evangelical Repentance; which we must thus understand, (as we said before,) that the seminal Principle of Faith, with some of its Acts, to-wit, the assenting Act, is before any Act of true Evangelical Repentance, and not that all the Acts of justifying faith are before any one Act of true Evangelical Repentance; otherwise we shall make Calvin foolishly to contradict himself.

For as was proved before, Calvin in the same Book, and Chap. fol. 2101 ter, Self. 19. lays down the right order of things exactly, saying, that the Lord Christ first declares, that the Treasures of Gods Mercy are in him set open to us, which Declaration of his calls for the faith of assent in us. After that in the second place, the Lord requires us to repent, induced thereto by the faith of the said Declaration. And Thirdly and Lastly, (*Exigit fidei iuramentum Dei promissoribus.*) He requires our trust in the promises of God to us, now truly repenting of our sins. The Act of Faith, then which Calvin held to be in order before Repentance, and to be the root and spring of it; is the Faith of the conditional Promise of God, that he hath Mercy and Pardon for us, if we truly repent. And this seems to be his meaning by what he writes in the second Paragraph following, For (saith he) whilst Christ and John preach thus, Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand: Do not they derive the cause of Repentance from the very Grace and Promise of Salvation? Therefore the import of their Words is ni-much, as if they had said; because the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, therefore repent. And a little after he adds, (*Quid etiam demonstrat illa Offerta exultatio, &c.*) Which thing also that exultation of Hopes demonstrates. Come and let us return unto the Lord; for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up; (*Quia spes venit tanquam stimulus additor, ne in suis peccatis torpent.*) Because the hope of pardon is given as a spur (to Repentance,) lest they should be secure in their sins. By this Passage we see, that the Faith which goes before Repentance, in Calvin's Judgment, is not the Faith that our sins are already pardoned; but that they shall be pardoned upon our sincere Repentance; which Faith puts us upon acting Repentance, and having put forth an Act of sincere Repentance, we immediately act Faith upon the promise, and apply it to our selves, and trust in the Lord, according to his gracious promise. If this be not Calvin's sense, let them free him from self-contradiction that can, for we cannot otherwise do it. However it be, we have him expressly affirming, that Faith (in some sense) is before Repentance, and that Repentance (such Repentance as that in Acts. 18. 23.) is before Remission of Sins and Justification: From whence it follows necessarily, that in his Judgment, both sincere Faith and Repentance are in order before Justification, and so that there is a real change and some holy principle and disposition wrought in the Soul before Justification. The same he affirms again elsewhere, for thus he writes on Mark. 1. 4. — *lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.* (Calvinus ex eo nimis colligit debet; poenitentiam esse veniæ causam, &c.) But from this it ought by no means to be inferred, that Repentance is the cause of pardon, or if God received into favour those who are converted, because they have merited or deserved it: (For even Conversion is self is a sign of God's free Grace and Favour,) but only (ordo et consequentia naturæ) the order and consequence of things is marked out, because God doth not forgive any sins but those for which men are displeased with themselves. From which Words of Calvin we observe, that where there is an order and consequence of things, there is a priority and posteriority,

teriority, and one of them is before another; but so it is, that in *Calvin's* opinion, between Repentance and pardon of sin, there is an order, and the one is consequent upon the other, pardon of sin is consequent upon Repentance, therefore Repentance is before pardon of sin, but Repentance can never be without some real holy change and disposition in the Penitent. Therefore there is such a change and holy disposition before Pardon and Justification. Again on *Luke 3. v. 4.* The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord. (*Eadem inquit*) vox aurius nostris quotidie insonat, ut Domino paremus viam, hoc est, sublati vitiiis qua regno Christi viam praecludent accessum demus ejus gratia. ) The same voice (saith he) daily sounds in our ears, that we should prepare the way for the Lord, that is, that we should give access unto his grace, by putting away our sins, which stop up the way against the reign of Christ in us. These Words plainly give us to understand, that according to *Calvin*, Repentance and turning from sin goes in order before pardon, and that it prepares us for the grace of Pardon and Justification. There needs no more to shew, that *Calvin* held true Repentance, as to the beginning of it, to be in order before pardon of sin and Justification. Yet when Repentance is taken for a course of holy living, in the actual performance of our first purpose to forsake our sins, and return unto the Lord, then in that sense it is confessed, that *Calvin*, and we with him hold Repentance to be after the several acts of Justifying Faith, and after Justification it self, and that it runs parallel with our Lives, and must be continued unto Death. This was that which our first Reformers called the best Repentance, which so enraged the Papists, that in the Council of Trent they Anathematized us for this Opinion: *Si quis dixerit*

*Concil. Trid. Sess. 14. Can. 13.* — optimum penitentiam esse tantum novam vitam, Anathema sit. If any shall say, that a new life is only the best Repentance, let him be accursed. Thus they. But we do not at all fear their

Curse, for notwithstanding it, or any other thing to the contrary, we firmly believe, and say, that a new life is the only best Repentance. And this best Repentance, this Repentance in its perfection we grant to be not only after justifying faith, but also to be after Justification it self, and after the forgiveness of all the sins that we had been guilty of before our Regeneration and Conversion; yet for all that, we still maintain according to the Scriptures of Truth, that the beginning of true Evangelical Repentance is in order before forgiveness of sins, and justification; and we think we have *Calvin* on our side, if we may believe his own words.

To *Calvin* succeeds *Beza* giving in his Testimony plainly for us, and saying in his large Confession of faith, (*Sed necesse est imprimis ut idem spiritus sanctus nos ad Jesum Christum recipiendum aptos & idoneos reddat, &c.*) But it is necessary (saith he) in the first place, that the same holy Spirit make us apt or fit and meet to receive Jesus Christ.

And in his short Confession of faith, Art. 11th. As it was not (saith he) in our power to invent or find out the Medicine of Salvation, so neither is it possible for us to find out the way to use that Medicine rightly: Because that falls out in this matter, which useth to be in bodily Diseases; for as when one desperately sick is ignorant of his Disease, it is necessary that the Physician not only find out a Medicine for him, but likewise that he so dispose the sick Person that he may be both willing and able to use the Medicine, and that he may know the way to use it aright, so in the Disease of the Soul, which is the most dangerous of all, and in which Men are not only ignorant of, but also Adversaries to their Salvation: It is necessary that we understand from the same Physician: First, What that Medicine is, then which way it is to be used: Finally, That by the same Physician we be made fit and meet for this that we may be both willing and able to use the Remedies proposed. Again, Art. 19. This Remedy (of free Salvation through Christ) is applied by a double efficacy of the Holy Spirit: For first, The Holy Spirit disposes or fits our understanding to perceive the Doctrine of the Gospel, which otherwise seems meer foolishness to the World. Then he persuades our minds that that Doctrine of free Salvation through Christ,

Christ, is not only true, but also that it pertains to us. And that is it which we call Faith so much commended in Scripture, to wit, when one persuades himself assuredly that the promises of Salvation and Eternal Life particularly and properly belong to him. By these passages of Beza we see that he held as we do, that before a Man do, or can actually believe with a justifying Faith, he is disposed, fitted and prepared by Christs Holy Spirit, for the right performing of that great work of believing aright. And in his little Book of Christian Questions and Answers, To the Question how we can be truly said to have all gifts from Christ received by Faith, since if Christ be apprehended or received by Faith, then Faith it self must go before that apprehension or reception. He Answers, If thou consider the order of causes, I confess that the principle or beginning of Faith (and that also true Faith) goes before the apprehension of Christ, and therefore that it is not given to them who are already ingrafted, but who are to be ingrafted. By this passage we see likewise that Beza never thought that all saving Grace flows into us, from Christ already united to us, But that before Union he gives us saving Grace by his Spirit, whereby we may be united to him. Christ by his Spirit first apprehends and takes hold of us, and fits us for, and brings us into actual Union with himself, and this Grace is in the order of causes before the Union on our part, and so is before our Justification. If our Author had understood and considered all this that we have quoted out of Beza, he would never have thought it impossible that we can have any true Grace, any Holy Disposition or Qualification before we be in Christ, and justified by Faith in him. For it is plain that we have the Grace from Christ, whereby we come to be in Christ, and Christ to be in us. And if it were not so, it would be impossible for us ever to be actually in Christ at all, or to be justified by Faith in him.

Bez. lib. quest. &  
Resp. p. 1. 149.  
49. pag. edit. 1587.

Our Third Witness is Mr. Fox in his Book, *De Christo gratis justificante*. Although (saith he) it be an undoubted Truth, That Faith in Christ, the most high Son of God, alone without works hath the Virtue and Power of justifying, as appears from the most clear words of Paul, and the Examples of Saints, but yet it doth not put forth this its justifying Virtue and Power upon all, (*præterquam in eos quos idoneos solum invenit suscipiende Divina gratia*.) but only upon those whom it finds fitted or qualified for receiving the Divine Grace or Favour of Justification: ) And that is, the humble and Penitent, as he shews in the following Section: Where towards the end of it, in page 310, he says, (*Preparat vulgarem penitentia materiam ad suscipiendam Justificationem*, &c.) Repentance indeed prepares the matter for the receiving the Grace of Justification. (That is, it prepares the Soul for receiving Justification not as an inherent form in the Popish Sense, but as a rich Privilege and Favour bestowed upon those who are disposed and qualified for it by Repentance.) And that it is not only a Legal, but an Evangelical Repentance, which he speaks of, is evident from what he saith at large in that Section, and especially from the Testimonies of Scripture, which he brings to prove it. Such as *Mat. 23. 18. Isa. 57. 15.*

Our Fourth Witness is Rollet whom we made use of before, and to whom Beza his Scholar in his Commentary on the *Ephes. p. 1081* gives this Testimony. That he was a Man (*quo nemo nostræ ætate Christum Jesum vel penitentis imbibebat, vel alioquin animis efficacius instillabat*) I den whom none in our Age either had drunk in Christ Jesus more deeply or thoroughly into his own heart, or more Powerfully conveyed him into the hearts and Souls of others. This Holy and Orthodox Minister of Christ in his Book of Effectual Calling saith, That in effectual Calling page 3, 4. considered as it is internal (*Duplex est Dei Gratia, sive operatio in cordibus nostris*, &c. There is a two-fold Grace of God, or operation in our hearts. The first Grace is, whilst God by his Holy Spirit creates a new and heavenly light in the mind,

mind, before involved in darkness, which neither saw; nor could see the things of the Spirit of God, 1 Cor. 2. 14. In the Will wholly perverted and turned away from God, he creates a rectitude, and lastly, a new Sanctity in all the Affections. Out of this Creation there exists or ariseth that which is called the new Creature, that which is called the new Man, which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness, Ephes. 4. 24.

The second Grace, or the second Operation of the Spirit— is the act of Faith it self, or an action proceeding from the new Creature, the action of the enlightened mind in knowing God in Christ; the action of the sanctified Will in embracing or apprehending God in Christ. Here the principal Agent is the Spirit of God himself,— the secondary Agent is the Humane Soul it self, or rather the new Man, and the new Creature it self in the Soul, and its faculties.

In this second Grace, which is the action or work of Faith, we are not now merely passive, but being acted by the Holy Spirit, we all, being excited to believe, we believe. In one word, with the Holy Spirit operating, we cooperate, and are workers together with the Holy Spirit. Now he cap. 34. p. 258. tells us afterwards in the same Book, that all this, and more than this, even the Holy Change that is wrought in the Soul by a true Evangelical Repentance, is before Justification. For (saith he) Repentance belongs to the place concerning Effectual Calling— Repentance goes before Justification, as Faith and Hope go before it.

From all which we observe, that in the judgement of Rollock there is a real change made in the Soul before it be justified, and that it is prepared for Justification by God's working in it an Holy Principle or disposition whereby it is inclined and enabled to produce the act of Faith, whereby it receives Christ, that for his sake, and through his Righteousness it may be justified.

We might bring Dr. Ames and Dr. Twiss for our Fifth and Sixth Witnesses, for they are of the same Opinion with Rollock as to this matter, save that Rollock took the Word Regeneration to signify the same thing with Sanctification, which comes after Effectual Calling and Justification; whereas they took Effectual Calling and Regeneration to be two words, which signify the same thing, to wit, the first saving change which is wrought in the Soul, when a new Seminal Principle of Spiritual Life is put into it, and it is brought off from Sin and the World, unto Christ, and unto God through Christ, that it may be justified by Faith in his Blood. This appears to have been their Judgment by what we have already quoted out of them upon the former head. Let but any that can read in Ames his *Marrow of Divinity*, the Twenty Sixth Chapter of the first Book, concerning *Vocation*; as likewise the Tenth Chapter of his Reply to *Greuncheimius* concerning the Nature of Faith, where he proves That God by his Spirit puts a Seminal permanent Principle of Grace into the Soul at its first Conversion, and that before any act of saving Faith, and consequently before Justification; We say, Let but any Man read those Two Chapters of Dr. Ames his Books now mentioned, and he will see it as clear as the Sun, that he was of the same mind with Rollock, and held, That an Holy Change is wrought on us, and a Seed or Principle of Holiness is put into us, and some Holy Act is produced in us before we be justified, and our sins be forgiven us.

And

And as for Dr. *Twiss*, though the Antinomians have laid claim to him, and some of ours have almost given him up to them, by Reason of some Expressions of his which seem to favour them; yet Mr. *Jessop* in his Preface to Mr. *Gratier* Book, hath shewed that they have no sufficient ground for their so doing; and hath proved (as we have further done) that he is on our side against them: Yea, and against our Antinomians too. We read, that *Arminius* in the Preface to his Answer unto *Perkins*, complained, that though Mr. *Perkins* did not, yet there were some others who did contend that Repentance did not go before, but follow after Remission of Sins. Whereunto Dr. *Twiss* answered, by Confessing ingenuously, That the places of Holy Scripture, which prove that Repentance is before Remission of Sins, are: *gratia. Resp. ( & expressiora & frequentiora )* both more express and more numerous; ad *Arminii* than those that seem to favour the other Opinion. And indeed the places of Scripture, that speak of Peoples repenting after their Sins are pardoned, prove nothing at all, but what we and all sober Christians grant, that our Repentance is to be continued all the days of our Life; and that the Repentance which is begun before Justification, and is but weak and imperfect, is to be carried on through Grace unto greater Perfection afterwards, by reducing our purposes into Practice, and bringing forth Fruits meet for Repentance; to the doing whereof the Assurance of Gods special Love to us in having pardoned our Sins, and accepted us as righteous unto Life through Jesus Christ, doth not a little animate and excite us. As to what *Twiss* saith there, that it is without Controversie, that Remission of Sins is an immanent Act in God, it is before both Faith and Repentance; that is, neither more nor less than this, that God himself and his Decree to rectify Sins, is before both Faith and Repentance; which is indeed very true, for God and his Decree was before this World, or any thing in this World: but though it be true, it is nothing to the purpose; for to speak properly as we ought, and as the Lord speaks to us in his Word, *Remission of Sins, is not an immanent Act of God*; that is, it is not the Desire of God which is Eternal, but the consequent and the effect of the Decree; which is Temporal, and is every where promised in the Scripture, as a thing sure, and to come upon Condition of Faith, and Repentance; as Dr. *Twiss* himself expressly affirms most frequently over and over as we have shewed already, and may do yet farther hereafter. From single Witnesses, we pass to the whole Assembly of Divines, who give in their Testimony for us; and it is the Synod of Dort, the most famous Assembly of Divines, that ever was in the Reformed Churches; for it consisted of a great number of Learned men, delegated and deputed from all the best Reformed Churches in Europe. In the eleventh and twelfth Canons, on the third and fourth Articles, their Words are, as followeth: But when God executes this his good Pleasure in the Elect; or works in them true Conversion, he not only causeth the Gospel to be outwardly Preached to them, and by the Holy Spirit powerfully enlightens their Mind, that they may rightly understand, and discern the things of the Spirit of God; but also by the Efficacy of the same regenerating Spirit, he penetrates or pierces into the innermost parts of Man, he opens his closed; he softens his hard, and circumcises his uncircumcised Heart; he infuses new qualities into his Will, and of dead makes it alive, of evil makes it good, of unwilling makes it willing, of disobedient makes it obedient, and so Acts and strengthens it; that as a good Tree, it may be able to bring forth the Fruit of good Actions. And then the Will now renewed, is not only acted and moved by God, but being acted by God, it acts it self. Wherefore even Man himself by that Grace received, is rightly said to believe and repent.

This was subscribed by the whole Synod, now here we have such a Testimony of the Reformed Churches for a real change, for Holy Qualifications and Dispositions in the Soul of Man before Justification; as we are sure our Author can never find the like to oppose against us, for no real change, no Holy Qualifications or Dispositions in the Soul of Man before justification. And that the Synod held this real change, those Holy Qualifications



1. qualifications or Dispositions to be in the Soul before *Justification*, is manifest; because they  
 affirm all this to be necessary, that the Will may be able to act, and that the Man may  
 produce the saving Acts of Faith and Repentance; but so it is, that the very Act in itself of  
 Faith is before Justification as hath been proved, and so it was believed to be by the Sa-  
 ved. Therefore a *fortiori*, all that is before the Act of Faith, is also before Justifica-  
 tion. This were enough, if we could say no more, to prove that it is we who cleave  
 to the old received Protestant Doctrine in this matter. Yet something more we will  
 add from some of the Suffrages of the Colledges of Divines recorded in the Acts of  
 the Synod. And first, we find that the *Emendatæ Divines* in their Judgment, concern-  
 ing the first Article do very particularly and clearly set down the way, and order of  
 Gods bringing his Elect unto Eternal Life and Glory. Their Words  
 are, (*Viz. inter Electionis decretum & decreti finem, intermedia, quæ De-*  
*us ex mera gratiâ peculiariter elocet ad salutem provehit, est. (1.) Christus.*  
*pag. 77. (2.) Vocatio ad Christum, efflicax. (3.) Fides. (4.) Justificatio per fi-*  
*dem, &c.*) The intermediate way between the Decree of Election,  
 and the end of the Decree, by which God of mere Grace, brings to Salvation those  
 whom he hath peculiarly chosen, is, (1.) Christ. (2.) Effectual Vocation unto  
 Christ. (3.) Faith. (4.) Justification, &c. To these they speak particularly, one  
 after another. First, They shew that Christ is deservedly set in the first place, for he  
 is the second Adam, through whom all the Elect are saved by unspeakable Mercy. What they  
 say of Christ there, we all agree to, and also that all the other particulars are subor-  
 dinate to him and through him.  
 2. Then they speak to the second means, which is Effectual Calling, and that they say is,  
 (*Quidam Vox Dei per suos Ministros, &c.*) When the Voice of God by his Ministers is  
 soundly outwardly in the Ears of the Body, that together with it, the Spirit of God  
 inwardly fits or prepares the Mind of the Hearer, that it may be able to understand,  
 and efficaciously disposes the Will to Assent (or rather Consent). Then they pro-  
 ceed to the next (*tertium est fides vera, &c.*) The third is true Faith, to wit, when  
 from Effectual Calling, there ariseth the Knowledge of Salvation understood, and  
 again Assent follows that Knowledge, and that such an Assent as applies the Promise  
 of the Gospel to the Believers own Conscience, &c. Lastly, They say that the  
 fourth and fifth means are the Effects of true Faith in the Elect, and they are Justifica-  
 tion, and after that, Sanctification and Perseverance to the end. From this Testimony  
 of the *Emendatæ Divines*, it is as evident, that in their Judgment, there are some Holy,  
 saving Preparations and Dispositions in the Souls of Gods select People before they be  
 justified, as it is evident that the second is before the fourth; for Effectual Vocation, where-  
 by these Holy Dispositions are wrought in the Soul, is the second, and Justification is the  
 fourth, between which, actual Faith comes in as the third. So that if we can but reckon  
 two, three, four, and can understand, that if the second be before the third, it must be also  
 before the fourth, then may we see that there are some Holy Dispositions and Qualifica-  
 tions in the Soul arising from Effectual Calling, before Justification. This was read in and  
 approved by the Synod, and therefore here we have again the Testimony of the whole  
 Synod of Dort, for Holy Dispositions and Qualifications in the Soul before Justifica-  
 tion. It would be almost endless to run over all the Suffrages of the several Colledges  
 of Divines and to quote what they have said to this purpose, therefore we shall pass that  
 as superfluous, and conclude with the Testimony of our own *British Divines*, which is to  
 be seen in their Collegiate Suffrage translated into English and Printed in the year, 1669.  
 Their Words are, "God doth regenerate, by a certain inward and  
 The Suffrage, wonderful Operation, the Souls of the Elect being stirred up and pre-  
 pared by the fore-said Acts of his Grace; and doth, as it were, create them  
 anew, by infusing his quickning Spirit, and seasoning all the Faculties of  
 the Soul with new qualities. Here, by Regeneration we understand not eyes  
 of the flesh, but that Act of the Holy Spirit, which goes before or tends to Regeneration;  
 that Act which affords as it is there, we conclude presently, that  
 as

as the Original hath it, it may presently be rightly affirmed ) This man is now born of God.

This Spiritual Birth presupposes a Mind moved by the Spirit, using the Instrument of Gods Word, whence also we are said to be born again by the incorruptible Seed of the Word, 1 Pet. 1. 23. Which must be observed, lest any one should idly and slothfully expect an Enthusiastical Regeneration, that is to say, wrought by a sudden Rapture, without any foregoing Action either of God, the Word, or Himself. Furthermore we conclude that the Spirit regenerating us, doth convey it self into the most inward Closet of the Heart, and frame the Mind anew, by caring the sinful Inclinations thereof, and by giving it strength, and a formal Principle. ( In the Original, it is *Principium formale* ) Or Active Power to produce Spiritual and saving Actions, Ephes. 2. 10. *We are his Workman-ship created in Christ Jesus unto good works.* Ezek. 36. 26. *I will take away the stony Heart, and give you an Heart of Flesh.* From this Work of God cometh our Ability to perform Spiritual Actions leading to Salvation, as the Act of Believing, 1 John 5. 1. *Whoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.* Of Loving, 1 John 4. 7. *Every one that loveth, is born of God.* Lastly, all works of Piety, John 15. 3. *Without me ye can do nothing.* Again,

Upon the former ( habitual ) Conversion, followeth our actual Con-  
version, wherein out of our reformed, or changed Will ( for the Ori-  
ginal is *ex mutata Voluntate* ) God himself draweth forth the very Act of

our Believing, and Converting, and this our Will-being first moved by God, doth it self also work by turning unto God ( *convertendo se ad Deum* ) and Believing, that is, by executing ( *elicendo* ) producing ) withal, its own proper & actively Act. — We say that God doth not only work than habitual Conversion or Change ( for this Word in the Original is *Mutacionem* ) whereby a man gets new Spiritual Ability to Believe and Convert, but also that God doth by a certain wonderful Efficacy of his secret Operation, extract out of our regenerated ( *Scilicet* ) Will, the very Act of Believing and Converting. — So

the Scripture speaketh in divers places, John 6. 65. *The Father giveth us Power to come unto the Son, that is to Believe.* Phil. 1. 29. *To you it is given to Believe, and moreover, the very Act of Believing.* 2 Tim. 2. 25. *God giveth Repentance.* — This

Action of God in producing Faith doth not hinder, but rather is the cause that the Will doth work together with God, and produce its own Act; and therefore this Act of Believing, howsoever it is sent ( or given ) from God, yet because it is performed by Man, is Attributed to Man himself, Rom. 10. 10. *With the Heart man believeth unto Righteousness.* 2 Cor. 4. 13. *I believed, therefore have I spoken.* Again, This Action of God doth not hurt the freedom of the Will, but strengthen it. — Here we deny that by

the Divine Operation there is any wrong offered to the Will ( or any hurt done to it, for it is in the Original, *negamus lesionem voluntatis* ) for God doth to work in Nature, even when he raiseth and advanceth it above its proper Sphere, that he doth not destroy the particular Nature of any thing, but leaves to every thing its own Way and Motion ( in *actione producenda* ) in producing its Action. When therefore God worketh in the Wills of Men by his Spirit of Grace, he makes them move in their own natural way or course, that is, *freely*; and then they do the work the more freely, by how much they are the more effectually stirred up by the Spirit of God, John 8. 36. *If the Son make you free, you shall be free indeed.* 2 Cor. 3. 17. *Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty.* Verily it seemeth incredible to us, that God who made our Wills, and gifted them with Liberty, should not be able to work on them, or in them, after such a manner, as that he may produce any good Action by them without hurting their Nature, that is freely; ( *ut quamlibet bonam actionem per easdem, illasque earum naturas, hoc est libere, eliciat* ). By these passages quoted out of the Suffrage of our Divines in the Synod of Dort, it is most evident that both they, and the Synod which approved their Suffrage, and gave them great

thanks for it, did all of them believe that there is and must be a great and holy change wrought on us, and holy Dispositions and Qualifications bestowed on us, before we are immediately able, ( and that we may be able ) to believe and repent, and consequently before we are justified. — Yea our Divines expressly reject it, as the first Arminian Error against that part of the third and fourth Articles, which relates to Regeneration and Conversion unto God by Faith and Repentance. [ *That in*

*Regeneration there are no spiritual Gifts infused into the Wills of Men.* ] This Arminian Error, they disprove, and amongst other Arguments against it, they use this for one. [ *As the Will of a meer natural Man, is said to*

*be vicious from a certain inbred and inherent wickedness, which in a wicked man even when he doth nothing, is habitual; so again we must acknowledge that in the Will of the regenerate, there is a certain Righteousness or Goodness ( as it is in the Original ) given and infused by God, which is presupposed unto their Religious Actions.* ] And many places set forth this habitual Righteousness or Goodness. — And

Prosper de Prosper calls this goodness of the Will, ( *superni agricolæ primam plantationem* ) the first planting of the Heavenly Husbandman. *New a Plantation* *tium. lib. 1.* Nates something ingrafted in the Soul, not an Act or Action flowing from the Soul. ] Thus our Divines at Dort, whereby we see that it is a branch of

Arminianism to deny that there is any Holy Habit, Seed, Root or Permanent Principle of Grace, or any Spiritual Qualification wrought in the Soul before Justification. And we find that long ago Robinson one of the rigidest Separatists from the Worship and Discipline of the Church of England, yet Religiously adhered to her Doctrine in this Point we are upon, for thus he writes in Defence of the

Defence of the Doctrine of the Synod at Dort. [ *That a man may have his Sin pardoned, who yet wants all brotherly Love and goodness; the Scriptures every where deny,* Mat. 6. 14, 15. 1 Joh. 3. 14, 15. Mark 11. 24, 25. Rom. 8. 1. Phl. 32. 1, 2. ] And afterwards in the same Book, [ *By the Word and Spirit (saith he) God regenerates Men, or gives them Faith and Repentance, which they must have before they can believe or repent; as the Child must have Life before it can live,*

*or do Acts of Life, and must be generated or begotten before it have Life or Being, Regeneration therefore goes before Faith and Repentance.* ] Here we see that old, rigid, zealous Nonconformist held that there must be a real, great change made on a Man; a Holy Principle must be put into him, and Holy Qualifications bestowed upon him before he can believe and repent, and consequently before he

can be justified. Again, before in the same Book, he saith expressly, that Rom. 8. 29, 30. shews plainly that our Predestination or Election goes before our Calling, and our Calling before our Justification. — And in the same Page, Gods choosing a Man, ( *whether in Decree from Eternity, or by Actual and Effectual Calling, and calling of him out of the State of Sin, by giving him the Spirit of Faith and Grace* ) goes before his believing, for he cannot believe before he have Faith, nor have it before God give him it, but his actual saving by Justification and Glorification follows after Faith.

The same Truth is witnessed unto by Mr. Ball, in his Treatise of Faith, [ *Every one (saith he) is not fit to receive the Promise of Mercy, the Enemies of the Gospel of Christ, Worldlings, Hypocrites, and all in whom Sin reigneth, can have no true Faith in Christ; he is only fit to receive Mercy, who knows that he is lost in himself, and unsatiably desires to be eased of the heavy burden of his Sins.* ] Faith is a Work of Grace — of the Efficacy of Gods Spirit, whereby we answer to the Effectual Call of God, and come unto him, that we might be partakers of Life Eternal. — And if saving Effectual Calling be precedent to Faith, the subject of living Faith is Man savingly called according to the purpose of Gods Will. We can reach no Faith to Salvation, but according to the Rule of Christ, ( *Mark 1. 15.* ) Repent and Believe the Gospel; no Remission, but according to the like rule, Luke. 24. 47. Acts 2. 37, 38.

Our last Witness is *ad. Gataker*, who saith [ *God doth not usually re-  
mit or release Sin, until he give Grace to ripen, which in the Gospel Phrase  
and Method goes constantly before pardon, &c.* ] We might easily bring  
many more of our Reformed Divines to witness unto this Truth, but  
these are sufficient to shew, that it is the old Protestant Doctrine, gene-  
rally received in the Reformed Churches, that there is and must be a real  
Holy Change, a seminal permanent Principle of Spiritual Life, some Holy Disposi-  
tions and Qualifications wrought in us by the Spirit of Christ, before we are justified  
by Faith in the Blood of Christ.

And here by the way, we must tell our Author, what it may be, he  
doth not know, *First*, that if he will believe *Bradwardin*, with whom  
(he saith) *God blessed England against the Pelagians*, then he will  
find it to be a Branch of the *Pelagian* Heresie, that there is no Gracious Principle,  
no Holy Disposition or Qualification wrought in us before our Justifi-  
cation. For *Bradwardin* saith so expressly, [ *Afferunt umbra (partes resi-  
dua opinionis Pelagii) remissionem peccati & Justificationem injusti procedere  
gratiam tempore vel natura.* ] That is, *Both* the remaining parts of the Opi-  
nion of *Pelagius*, *asserts* that Remission of Sin, and the Justification of the un-  
just, go before Grace in Time or in Nature. Thus *Bradwardin*, and then he  
falls a Confuting of this *Pelagian* Opinion, by such Arguments as most manifestly shew,  
that by the Word (*Grace*) there, he meant not the Good Will, Love, and Favour of  
God, but the Effect of it upon the Soul, even a Gracious Gift communicated unto,  
and a real Holy change wrought in the Soul; whereby of ungracious it is made inhe-  
rently Gracious, and of unjust and unholy, it is made inwardly just and Holy. This  
Grace, this Gracious change he maintains to be in Order before Remission of Sin, and  
the Denial of this Grace, this Gracious change before Remission of Sin, he declares to  
be a Branch of *Pelagian* Heresie. We thought fit to let the World know, that what  
by some is accounted *pure Gospel Doctrine* now, was in former times accounted a part  
of *Pelagius* his Opinion, and that even by *Bradwardin*, whom our Author so highly  
commends. Yet at the same time we must declare, that we do by no means approve  
*Bradwardin* his way of Confuting that *Pelagian* Opinion; for he was himself Erroneous  
in the Point of Justification, and held that we are justified before God by inherent Hol-  
iness, and in this very place, endeavours to prove against *Pelagius* that Grace is be-  
fore Remission of Sin, because Sin is a Privation, which is no otherwise remitted,  
than by the Habit of Grace its coming in, and driving Sin out of the Soul, just as  
Death is expelled or driven away by Life, Blindness by Sight, Darkness by Light, Ig-  
norance by Knowledge. Thus he Confuted *Pelagius* his Error in the Point of Justification.  
And now let all Protestants Judge whether *Pelagius* was not well Confuted, and whe-  
ther *England* was not greatly blessed with such a Confuter of *Pelagius* in the Point of  
Justification! We are confident our Author was wholly ignorant of the Principles of  
*Bradwardin*, otherwise he would have been wiser than to have quoted him against us  
in this Controversie: But it is his way to talk confidently of what he doth not un-  
derstand. Yet our God is infinitely Wise, and brings Light out of his Darkness, for  
by this we come to understand by the Testimony of *Bradwardin* (who we Hope may  
be believed in a matter of Fact) that it was a piece of *Pelagianism* to hold that we  
are justified, and our Sins pardoned, before there be a real change made in us; and Holy  
Dispositions or Qualifications wrought in our Souls by Christs Holy Spirit. And  
if any Body should Question the Truth of *Bradwardin* his Testimony, concerning *Pelagi-  
us* his Opinion about Justification, we can prove the same matter of Fact, by the Testi-  
mony of a better Witness; and that is the famous *Augustine*, who was Contemporary  
with *Pelagius*, and wrote against his Opinions at their first appearance in the World.

The other Secret which we have to tell our Author, is, that it is a *Papish Opinion* to  
assert that there is no Gracious Principle infused, no Holy Disposition or Qualification  
wrought in us by Gods Spirit, before the Remission of our Sins.

Gatakers  
shadows  
without sub-  
stance: p. 55.

Let. p. 13.

Bradward.  
de causa dei  
lib. 1. Cap.  
43. p. 397.

Of this Opinion was *Jacobus Almain*, a Doctor of the Sorbon, who lived in the 15th Century a little before the Reformation, as appears by what he writes in his Book of Morality. (*Ista rationalis, est vera, quia Deus acceptat aliquem ad vitam eternam, dat illi Charitatem, et non e converso: nam ista est falsa, quia dat Charitatem, acceptat ad vitam eternam, ergo prius natura acceptat ad vitam eternam, quam dat Charitatem infusam.*) This way of reasoning is true, because God accepts a man unto Eternal Life, therefore he gives him Love, or infuses into him a Principle of Grace; but was on the contrary for this is false, that because God gives him Love, or infuses into him a Principle of Grace, therefore he accepts him unto Eternal Life, and therefore God doth first in Order of Nature accept a man unto Eternal Life, before he give him infused Charity. Thus *Almain*, whereupon we observe, that he held Justification taken in the Protestant Sense, to be before any real Holy change be made in the Soul, by infused Grace in Regeneration and Effectual Calling. For (1.) By Acceptance unto Eternal Life, he meant that we call by the Name of Justification. (2.) By Gods giving infused Love, he meant that which we call Regeneration and Effectual Calling, or the Holy change that is thereby begun in the Soul. But so it is, that he held Acceptance unto Eternal Life, to be before the Gift of infused Love, or infused Grace, which they call by the Name of Love; therefore he held Justification to be in Order, before Effectual Calling, or any Holy Principle put into, or change wrought in the Soul thereby.

And the Popish Bishops of *Walenburg* are yet more clearly for this, for thus they write, [*Remission of Sins taken for the not infusing of them, in Order of Nature goes before inherent Justice.*] That is, in their way of speaking, before the Infusion of any Principle of Grace and Holiness, and this they prove by the Words of the fourth Chapter, of the Sixth Session of the Council of Trent, whereunto they adde, that Remission of Sins is not the same thing, with inherent Justice, because that according to *Bellarmine*, *Vasquez*, and many other School Divines, our Sins may be absolutely pardoned and remitted, by the mere Non-imputation of them, without the Infusion of Inward and Inherent Justice or Holiness, and consequently the Remission of Sins or Justification (as the Protestants speak) and Inward, Inherent Justice, which according to them, is Sanctification (begin) may be separated, and may be given without us, the one without the other. These are the very Words (truly Translated) of *Monsieur Le Fevre*, a Doctor of the Sorbon, in a Book written against the Famous *Monsieur Arnauld*, in the Year, 1684.

The Case was this, *Monsieur Arnauld*, in his *Renversement de la Morale*, had laboured hard to prove that such Calvinists as our Author, had so corrupted our Christian Morals by their Errours about Justification, that they are the vilest of Hereticks, and can never be good Catholics; this was the Judgment of the Ring-leader of the *Jansenists*, (whom our Author commends, P. 21. of his Letter) that such Protestants as he is, are damned Hereticks by Reason of their Errors in the matter of Justification; but on the contrary *Monsieur Le Fevre* undertakes to prove by invincible Arguments, that such Calvinists as our Author, may be good Roman Catholics, notwithstanding all that *Monsieur Arnauld* hath written to prove them Hereticks; for tho' they hold that men may be pardoned and justified, before there be any real change made in them, or any holy permanent Principle of Grace, Disposition or Qualification wrought in their Souls by the Holy Spirit; yet they may be good Catholics for all that; because *Almain*, and the Bishops of *Walenburg* were of the same Opinion concerning Justification; and tho' *Bellarmino* and *Vasquez* do not think that *de facto*, Justification is after that manner, yet they confess it is possible it may be so; and the Council of Trent is not against, but rather for its being so, *de facto*: And these were all good Roman Catholics. Therefore such a Calvinist as our Author may likewise be a good Roman Catholic, for in this matter he agrees with the Doctrine of the Roman Church. This to us seems to have been the design of that Learned and Politick



sick scholastic to show that such Opinions about Justification as this is, should not hinder a Reconciliation with the Church of Rome, since he holds the same Doctrine her self. Whether *Le Fèvre* do right to his own Church or not, in fastening that Opinion upon her, concerns not us to inquire after; but we think he has sufficiently proved, that it is a *Popish Opinion*, that is an Opinion that hath been long in the Church of Rome, and is in it, and held by some of its Bishops at this day. And we know the Possibility or impossibility of the thing, hath been matter of his disputes amongst their Schoolmen. Witness *Haynes* in his *2da. Disput.* 206. 207. 208. *Suarez* l. 2. de gratia Cap. 22. 23. *Beza* in *Summa Theolog.* part. 2. 4. part 2. Tract. 4. de justificatione. *Cambal.* Cap. 3. 4. 5. *Schulzinger.* *David.* *de Merito* — if our Author please to Consult those Popish Schoolmen; he may find some Arguments that may be of some use to him, and may help him to persuade the People to believe that God may forgive them their Sins before there be any saving change of their Hearts; and any Holy Seed or Principle, or Grace put into them; or any Gracious Disposition; or Qualification wrought in them by the Spirit of Christ. And the People may if they please, go on to dream, that *Religion*, *Faith* and *Amoribus* *Religion*, taking it upon our Authors Word to be a part of the pure Christian Religion; and of the Doctrine of Justification by free Grace, without good Works and Holy Qualifications, or any thing that looks like them.

But for our part we declare, that we are for the Doctrine of the *Synod of Dort* in the Point of a real Holy Change, and Holy Qualifications, before Justification, and cannot but prefer it before that *Religion* Opinion, which some People are so fond of; and they must not expect that ever we will humour them in that matter; unless our Author will solidly answer our Arguments, and give us better Arguments for his Opinion, than we have here given for ours. As for what he saith to that purpose in his Letter, we can therein find nothing of any weight; as in Page 20. We say we (quoth he) that there is an actual partaking of Christs fulness of Grace, till we be in him by Faith, though the Faith is also given us on Christs behalf, Phil. 1. 29. And we believe through Grace, Acts 18. 27. Thus he Argues to prove, that all the Grace we receive from Christ, comes from our being united to him by Faith, and so that we cannot actually partake of the Grace of Christ before our Union with Christ by Faith. Now if this be his demand of him concerning this being in Christ by Faith, or (which is the same thing) this Union with Christ by Faith, either it is effected by the Grace of Christ, or without the Grace of Christ, by the meer Power of Nature? Not the second, to wit, without the Grace of Christ, by the meer Power of Nature. For (1.) That is rank *Pelagianism*, or *Semipelagianism* at least. (2.) It is contrary to what he says in the same place, that the Faith by which we come to be in Christ is given us on Christs behalf, and that we believe through Grace. The First then is that, which he doth and must choose to say, to wit, that our Union with Christ by Faith is effected by the Grace of Christ. And then it is self-evident, that that Grace of Christ which Effects Faith in us and the Union with Christ by Faith, is before Faith and the Union by Faith, because the Cause always is and must be in Order of Nature before the Effect. And further, if the Grace of Christ by which we believe first in him, and are united to him, be before that Faith and Union by Faith, then we receive that Grace from Christ before we be in Christ by Faith, and we receive it in this end, that our faculties may be fitted and prepared; yes and powerfully helped actually to believe, and by believing to be actually united unto Christ; thus our Author is caught in a Net of his own making, he blows hot and cold out of the same Mouth, and contradicts himself most foully in saying, that we do not actually partake of Christs fulness till we be in him by Faith, and yet that we have that Faith, and Union by Faith, from the Grace of Christ, the cause thereof; for certainly that Grace is a part of Christs fulness, and if he give it us and we receive it from him for the producing of Faith and Union with him by Faith, then we actually partake of his fulness before we be in him by Faith.

That People therefore may no more be puzzled with such self-confounding and contradictory

traditious Stuff; we desire them to consider; (1.) That all our Supernatural Grace is from Christ by his Spirit, this we are all agreed in. (2.) That yet all Supernatural Grace is not from Christ after the same Way and Manner, for there is some Grace from Christ before Union, and in Order to Union, and some Grace is from Christ united, from Christ now in actual Union with our Souls by Faith; of the first sort, is the first preventing Grace, the Grace by which we are Effectually Called; the Grace by which we are disposed and prepared to believe; and by which we do actually believe, and by so believing answer the Call, receive Christ into our Hearts; and come to be actually united unto him. This Grace being the cause of Faith, and of the Union by Faith, is before Union with Christ, and so cannot possibly be from Christ considered as united to us by Faith. Though then all our Grace be from Christ, yet it is notoriously false, that it is all from him as ours already by Faith; for preventing Grace which is before Faith, is not drawn from Christ by Faith; as also Faith itself, we mean the first Principle and first Act of Faith, is not drawn from Christ as already ours by Faith, for then Faith would be both before and after it self, which is contradictory non-sense, and impossible. Of the second sort, is all subsequent Grace, the Grace of Justification, of Progressive Sanctification and Perseverance, yea all that Grace whereby Gods Select People (being once called according to his Purpose) are fitted for, and brought unto Glory, is from Christ united, from Christ in actual Union with our Souls by Faith. *Augustin* writing against the *Pelagians* above 1200 years ago, hath cleared up this matter in few Words, writing *pist. 105.* *Ecce Christus to Sixtus, [ Ita sine Spiritu fides, non est recte quissiam crediturus, nec sine spiritu orationis salubriter oraturus; non quia ubi spiritus sit omnia hac operatus unus atque idem spiritus, dividens propriae utriusque prout vult, quia spiritus ubi vult, spirat: sed quod sciendum est, aliter adjuvat nondum inhabitans; aliter inhabitans. — nam nondum inhabitans, adjuvat ut sint fideles; inhabitans adjuvat iam fideles. ]* That is, So without the Spirit of Faith, no man will ever believe aright, nor without the Spirit of Prayer, will any man ever pray in a saving manner; nor that there are so many Spirits, but one and the same Spirit doth all these things, dividing unto every man that which is proper to him, as he will, for the Spirit dwells where he will. But it must be confessed that the Spirit doth otherwise help before he doth inhabit, and otherwise when he doth inhabit in the Soul; for before he comes to inhabit in the Soul, he helps men that they may be Believers; but when he doth inhabit and dwell in the Soul, he helps them who are Believers. This one Distinction of *Augustin* attended unto, would help People to understand this matter, and to answer all that our Authour saith against any real change, or Holy Seed, Disposition or Qualification wrought in the Soul before it be justified. For our Blessed Lord by his Holy Spirit, first prepares and qualifies, and makes us meet to be an Habitation for himself; and then he comes unto us by the same Spirit, and dwells in us and abides with us for ever, *Ephes. 2. 22.* and *3. 17.* and *1 Cor. 3. 16.* Now the first of these, is in Order before Justification. God by his Spirit and Word, first makes us such as his Word requires us to be, that we may be justified; he savingly enlightens our Minds, and enlivens our Hearts, he gives us a Seed of Faith, and a Holy Principle of Light, Life and Love, and by an influence of actual Grace, causes us freely to reduce the said Seed and Principle into Act, and so actually to believe and repent; which when we do through Grace, then he justifies us on the account of *Christi satisfactionis meritorious Righteousness* imputed to us. And after that we are effectually Called, and thereupon are become Penitent Believers, and are justified and reconciled; the Lord gives us his Spirit, and by his Spirit he comes and dwells in us, he strengthens and encreases the Grace that he had begun in us, and makes us more and more Holy in Heart and Life. This is that which is commonly called Sanctification, and follows after Justification, and through Christs dwelling in us by his Spirit, is carried on from one degree to another, till it have attained its gradual Perfection, and be consummated in Glory. But he objects, (1.) Shall we tell Men, that unless they be Holy, they must not believe on Jesus Christ; nor venture on him for salvation?

on, till they be qualified, and fit to be received by him. This would forbid Preaching the Gospel at all, or to forbid all Men to believe on Christ; for never was any Sinner qualified for Christ, nor is it possible that ever any Sinner should be qualified for Christ. We Answer our Author had said a little before in the same Page, That every one who Believes on Christ, *Acts* that Faith as the chief of Sinners, that is, believes as an unbeliever, as was before proved to be his meaning by his own exprels Words, if his Words be expressive of his Mind. And now by the Question, which he puts to us here, he seems plainly to be of Opinion, that every man must believe as an unbeliever, or else no man can ever believe at all; and Ministers must give over Preaching the Gospel, for they can never preach it as it should be preached, unless they tell People that they must *Act* their Faith as the chief of Sinners, that is, they must believe as unbelievers; for either we must tell People that they must believe as Unbelievers, or else that they must not believe till they be first Holy, and that is, that they must never believe at all, because it is impossible for them to be Holy, till after they have believed in Christ and be united unto him by Faith. This is plainly the sense of our Authors Words, and the force of his Reasoning; which puts us in mind of what Calvin says out of *Augustin* ( *de bono perseverantia*, Cap. 22. ) that there are ( *injusti de flores gratia* ) some foolish Preachers of Grace, and surely ( if any ) they are to be accounted such Preachers, who in effect tell People that they must believe as unbelievers, or else they must not believe till they be first Holy, and that is, they must never believe at all. But is there no way to avoid this foolish senseless way of Preaching? Our Author thinks there is not, we on the contrary are persuaded, that there is a way to avoid it; and in our Judgment it may thus be easily done; we tell People that they must believe in Christ not as Unholy Unbelievers, nor yet as Holy with that Holiness which is the effect of Believing and follows after Faith in Christ; but by ceasing to be Unholy Unbelievers, and by becoming Holy Believers; and if they ask us how this can possibly be done? we answer, Not by Power of Nature, but by the Power of Gods special Grace? if they ask further, How they can obtain that special Grace before they believe and be in Christ by Faith, since all Grace is derived from Christ by Faith? we answer, that all Grace indeed is derived from Christ, but it is a most notorious falshood, that all Grace is derived from Christ by Faith; for the first special Grace which is the Cause of Faith, and whereby we believe in Christ, is not from Christ by Faith, but it is from Christ before Faith; and it is given us by the Holy Spirit of Christ to work Faith in us, and to bring us into Union with Christ by Faith; if they say that even according to this way, People must still believe before they are Holy, and so must believe as not being yet Holy. We answer, that is true in one respect and false in another. It is true that People must believe before they are Holy with that Progressive Holiness, which is the effect of justifying Faith, and follows after Justification; but it is utterly false, that People do believe or can believe *scarcely before they are Initially Holy*, before they are Holy with that first beginning and Principle of Holiness, which consists in removing the ill Disposition of our Faculties, and in giving our Faculties a right Spiritual Supernatural Disposition and fitness for the Act of Believing; this Holy Principle concurs to the producing of the Act of Faith, and so must be in Order before it, and then the Act it self of Faith, which is an Holy Act, must be in order before Justification: Therefore it is utterly false, that there can be no Holiness at all, in any kind or degree before Faith and Justification by Faith, since before actual Faith, there is the Holy Seed and Principle both of Faith and Repentance and of other Graces too, and in order of Nature there is an Holy actual Faith before Justification; and this is a Truth so clear that our Author himself sometimes could see it; as *Page* 21. Where he says that no man can do any thing that is good, till Gospel Grace renew him, and make him first a good man; this is very true, if it be rightly understood, *thou*, No man can do any thing that is Spiritually, Supernaturally and savingly good, till Gospel Grace, that is, internal special Grace renew him and make him first a good man, that is, a good man initially, or make him begin to be

a good Man. But now this makes against our Author himself, and clearly proves that no Man can believe with a saving justifying Faith, till Gospel Grace renew him and make him first a good Man: this Consequence from his own Words he can never avoid, unless he will say that a saving justifying Faith is no good thing; for if it be not an evil but a good thing, no Man can do it till Gospel Grace have renewed him, and make him first a good Man. So then we have found by his own Confession that a Man is first good through Grace, and then he believes in Christ on Justification. And if a Man be thus good, initially good before he actually believe with a saving justifying Faith, then is he Holy also, initially Holy before he do so believe, for that Initial Goodness, and this Initial Holiness is one and the same thing. And further, if a Man may be, and must be thus initially Good and Holy before he actually believe, then he may be qualified before he actually believe; for he cannot be Good and Holy as aforesaid, without Gods putting some good qualities into him. This the Synod of Dort hath determined in their 11<sup>th</sup> Canon on the 3<sup>d</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Articles, as was shewed before, and it is hoped our Author will not oppose the Determination of that Synod.

Now whenever God by his Spirit puts good qualities into a Man, he thereby qualifies him; for the very formal Effect of good Qualities is to qualify the  
 Pag. 11. Man to whom God gives them. But saith our Author, Whence should a Man have any good Qualification before he be in Christ by Faith, since a Sinner out of Christ, hath no Qualification for Christ but Sin and Misery? We Answer, that before a Man be in Christ by Faith, he hath some good Qualification from Christ by his Spirit, preparing him for, and bringing him unto Union with himself, by a legal Faith.

As to what he saith, that a Sinner out of Christ hath no Qualification for Christ but Sin and Misery; We Answer, by distinguishing thus, he hath no Qualification but Sin and Misery, of and from himself; It is true. But that he hath no Qualification of and from Christ by his Holy Spirit, but Sin and Misery; it is utterly false, and the contrary is true, to wit, that a Man who hath no Qualification of and from himself, but the evil Qualification of Sin and Misery, yet of and from Christ by his Spirit and Word, he hath the good Qualification of a Heart in part changed and renewed, and of a Holy Seed and Principle of Grace put into his Heart. Though a Man cannot qualify himself for Christ, yet nothing hinders but that Christ by his Spirit and Word can qualify a Man for Union with himself, and for Justification by his Meritorious Righteousness.

Yes saith our Author, something doth hinder, for I boldly affirm, Let. p. 11. that such a man (who were so qualified) would not, nor could ever believe on Christ. We are not willing here to apply the Proverb, That none is so bold as blind Bayard. But this we must say, that we cannot see that this Man hath any probable ground for such Confidence. Sure we are, it will be a very difficult task to prove that a man cannot possibly believe in Christ, because Christ by his Word and Spirit, hath fixed and qualified him for Believing. But it seems nothing is difficult to this bold man, and therefore he will prove it by an Argument taken from the Nature of Faith; thus, Faith (saith he) is a lost, helpless, condemned Sinner casting himself on Christ for Salvation. But the qualified Man is no such Person.

And then the Conclusion, if rightly inferred from the Premises, is this, ergo, The qualified Man is not Faith, &c. A goodly Argument indeed, and a Foundation fit for this Man to ground his Confidence upon. If he say that his Argument doth not so conclude, but rather thus. Faith is a Gracious Act, whereby a lost helpless condemned Sinner, casts himself on Christ for Salvation; but the qualified Man is not a lost helpless condemned Sinner, casting himself on Christ for Salvation, therefore the qualified man is not (what is he not? why he is not?) a lost helpless condemned Sinner casting himself on Christ for Salvation. Is this now his Argument? And doth it thus conclude, then his Argument is as ridiculous as his Confidence. Do him,

him keep to his Premises laid down in his Letter; and if he can, let him regularly infer from them another Conclusion than one of these.

But let what will become of the form of his Argument. We answer by distinguishing both Propositions. And (1.) For the first, we say, that a Person who by true Faith casts himself on Christ for Salvation, is indeed a Sinner, lost and helpless in and of himself, and he is condemned by the Law; but tho' that be true, yet in Order of Nature before he believes, and in the very Act of Believing, he is found and helped by the Lord; and hath a Pardon offered him by the Gospel, and by Faith he receives it, *Abs* 10. 43.

Then for the second Proposition, we distinguish it also thus. The qualified Man is not such a Person, is not a lost, helpless, condemned Sinner; that is, the Man that is, (1.) Qualified with a Satisfactory, Meritorious Qualification. (2.) That is, so qualified by himself, he is not such a Person: It is true, and we grant it. But with all, we say that indeed it is impossible for any Man so to qualify himself. Yet we maintain, that a Man who is qualified by the Holy Spirit, and free Effectual Grace of Christ, is such a Person, and doth by Faith cast himself on Christ for Salvation; our being qualified by the Holy Spirit and free Effectual Grace of Christ, is so far from hindring our believing (as our Author boldly, but ignorantly affirms) that in Truth it doth very much further our believing; it lets us see, and causes us to feel that we are lost and helpless in and of our selves, and condemned by the Law; and that we are found and helped by the Lord, and can be pardoned only by the Gospel. Whereupon it inclines and moves us, to flee unto Christ for refuge, and so cast our selves on him for Justification and Salvation.

Thirdly, In the same Page, we have another of his Objections. *Let* p. 11. gainst the Truth, we have been proving by *Scripture, Reason, and Testimony* of Protestant Divines. [Shall we (saith he) warn People that they should not believe on Christ too soon?] Either this Interrogation is altogether impertinent, or there is this Argument implied in it, if there be a real change, and a holy gracious Principle wrought in Peoples Hearts, before they do or can believe with a saving justifying Faith, then it will follow that Ministers should warn people not to believe on Christ too soon, but so to do is absurd and contrary to Scripture. We Answer, by denying the Consequence of the first Proposition as false, for it doth not follow that we should warn People not to believe on Christ too soon. And we have nothing Offered to prove that such an absurdity follows from our Doctrine, but this mans bare Word, which we have found to be so often false in matter of Fact, that we can give no credit to it in other things.

And he is so unhappy here and elsewhere throughout his Letter, that he makes his own Tongue or Pen to fall upon himself; for he confesses that it is no good Argument, that if People cannot be truly Holy before the Tree be changed, *Matth.* 17. 33, 34, 35; and before they have a new Heart, *Ezek.* 36. 26, 27. (as he grants they cannot), then Ministers should warn People not to be Holy too soon. For to give them any such warning he grants to be absurd.

Let him then consider, whether the same or the like Answer he can *Let* p. 11. 12. give to this Argument; which would prove that Ministers should warn People not to be Holy too soon, may not be given to the other silly Argument, whereby he would prove that upon our Principle Ministers should warn People not to believe on Christ too soon; for it is as certainly true, that People cannot actually believe on Christ with a saving justifying Faith, before the Tree be changed and the Heart be in part renewed; as it is that they cannot be truly Holy before the Tree be changed, and the Heart be renewed. When we are to deal with Unbelievers, our Lord hath given us other Work to do, than to warn them not to believe too soon; and let our Author try when he pleases, he will find enough to do, to convince them, that their present Indisposition and disability to believe, doth not free them from the Obligation, which the Lord by his Word hath laid upon them to believe;



believe; and to direct them unto the right means, in the use whereof they may obtain from the Lord both the necessary Disposition unto Faith, and also the Principle and Act of Faith it self. Our Author we perceive has been at this Work, and before we have done with him, we shall see what a rare Specimen of his skill this way, he hath given the World.

Fourthly, But he farther Objects, *We hold forth that God justifieth Pag. 25. the Ungodly, Rom. 4. 5. Neither by making him Godly before he justifie him, nor leaving him Ungodly after he hath justified him; but that the same Grace that justifies him, doth immediately sanctifie him.* We Answer, this is the Text that our Antinomians much insist upon, and think it sufficient to make all Men Antinomians: And we are glad to find, that it hath not that full effect upon him, for'tho he be one with them, with respect to any Holy change in Order before Justification, and denies it, as they do; yet he separates himself from them with respect to what follows after Justification, and saith, that we are sanctified immediately after Justification, and so he joins himself to us; now there may be good worldly Policy in this to hold with both sides as much as he can.

But if he do not agree with himself, what ground can others have to trust him, that ever he will heartily agree with them; and that he doth not agree with himself, we think is apparent from what he writes, *Pag. 16. A Man (saith he) is to believe that he may be justified, Gal. 2. 16. Again, Pag. 32. No Words or Warnings repeated, nor plainest Instructions can beat into Mens Heads and Hearts, that the first coming to Christ by Faith, or Believing on him, is not a Believing we shall be saved by him, but a Believing on him, that we may be saved by him.*

And again, *Pag. 7. The direct Act is properly justifying saving Faith, by which the lost Sinner comes to Christ, and relies upon him for Salvation. Yet when we do press Sinners to come to Christ by a direct Act of Faith, consisting in an humble reliance on him for Mercy and Pardon; they will understand us (whether we will or not) of a reflex Act of Faith, by which a Man knows and believes that his Sins are pardoned, and that Christ is his: when they might easily know that we mean no such thing.*

These three Passages, show clearly that he holds saving Faith to be both before Justification, and before Assurance of Justification. We confess that we do very well understand this to be the meaning of these Words now quoted out of his Letter, for we think they are not capable of any other sense; but though we understand the Words of the Letter, yet we do not understand the Author of them, and we much doubt whether he understands himself; and that because

*Pag. 7. he immediately adds, that Mr. Marshall in his excellent Book lately Published, hath largely opened this, and the true Controversie of this Day.*

And *Pag. 35. Marshalls Book (saith he) is a deep practical well joined Discourse, — and if it be singly used, I look upon it, as one of the most useful Books the World hath seen for many Years. I fear not, but it will stand firm as a Rock against all Opposition and will prove good Seed, and Food, and Light, and Life to many hereafter.*

Who that reads this can doubt, but that our Author has read Marshalls Book, and that he approves it, and believes every thing at least, that is material in it; and yet there is one thing very material in it, and it is one of the main joints in it, *That justifying Faith is a Believing, that we are now justified and shall be Eternally saved; and that the Assurance of this, that we are now justified and shall be saved, is essential to the direct Act of Faith.* This Marshall with all his might strives to prove; and 'tis certain he hath done it to the Conviction of our Author, who believes that, that Opinion can never be disproved again. Yea he seems so Confident of the Truth of Marshalls Opinion, that he spares not to reflect on the Westminster Assembly of Divines for denying it, as they do in their Confession of Faith, Chap. 18. Art. 3. In these Words, *This infallible Assurance doth not so belong to the Essence of Faith; but that a true Believer may tarry long, and conflict with many difficulties, before he be partaker of it: Thus the Assembly.* But doth he reflect on them for this? why if he doth not, let him tell

us what he means by these following Words, *Was not the Holiness of the first Protestants, eminent and shining?* and yet they generally put Assurance in the Definition of their Faith. We cannot say that Gospel Holiness has prospered much by the Correction or Mitigation of that harsh-like Definition. If these Words of his (whatever might be his Intention) do not reflect upon the Assembly we do not understand plain English, and moreover we cannot but think also, that they imply his owning of *Marshall's* Definition of Faith, as not being really harsh, but only harsh-like, though he puts Assurance into it, as being essential to Faith in its direct Act.

So that by comparing one Passage of his Letter with another, we find that he believes with *Marshall*, That true Faith in Christ is a Believing at first, that we are justified: And he believes with us that, *that is not true*, but that *it is a believing only at first, that we may be justified*. Again, he believes with *Marshall*, that justifying Faith in its first direct Act, is a Believing that we shall be assuredly saved by Christ.

And he believes with us, that justifying Faith in its first direct Act, is no such thing, it is not a believing that we shall be saved by Christ, but it is a believing, that we may be saved by Christ.

Further, he believes with *Marshall*, that Assurance that our Sins are forgiven, and that our Souls shall be saved, is essential to the first direct Act of justifying Faith. And he believes with us, that it is quite superfluous, and that we do not get such Assurance by the first direct Act of Faith, but by its reflex Acts, which follow after the direct.

And then for the *Antinomians*, he believes with them that before Justification there is no real change wrought in the Soul, from Ungodliness to Godliness, in any Kind or Degree, because the Apostle Paul saith in Rom. 4. 5. *That God justifies the Ungodly*. And yet he believes with us, that before Justification, there is a real change wrought in the Soul from Unbelief to Faith in Christ, because the same Apostle saith in Gal. 3. 16. *That we believe in Christ, that we may be justified*. And he cannot deny, but that a real change from unbelief to Faith in Christ, is a change, and a real change too, from Ungodliness to Godliness in some kind or degree, because he himself holds unbelief to be the chiefest part of Ungodliness, and Faith in Christ to be the chiefest part of Godliness, witness his own Words, *Pag. 15, 16. That believing on the Lord Jesus for Salvation is more pleasing to God, than all obedience to his Law, and that unbelief is the most provoking to God, and the most damning to Men of all Sins*. If our Author believe this, then by necessary Consequence he believes that unbelief is the chiefest part of ungodliness, and that Faith is the chiefest part of Godliness; and that a real change from unbelief to Faith in Christ, is a real change from Ungodliness to Godliness in some kind and degree. The import and issue of this, is that our Author believes both parts of a Contradiction: With the *Antinomians* he believes that before Justification, there is no real change from Ungodliness to Godliness in any kind or degree. And with us he believes, that before Justification, there is a real change from the Ungodliness of unbelief, to the Godliness of Faith, because the Sinner through Grace comes off from his Ungodly unbelief that he may believe, and he believes that he may be justified, and so in order of Nature before he be justified.

Now since our Author is so strong a Believer, that he can believe both parts of a Contradiction; why may not we think that, as he believes that we preach a new Pelagian Arminian Gospel; so he may believe at the same time that we do not preach a new Pelagian, Arminian Gospel, but the old Everlasting Gospel of Christ. He believes in his Letter, that we do preach a new Gospel, and for ought we know to the contrary, he may at the same time believe in his Conscience, that we do not preach a new Gospel; for his Letter and his Conscience are two different things, that may not have much Communion one with another, yea in this matter they

may be at Hostile Enmity, the Letter may be against his *Conscience*, and his *Conscience* against the Letter.

But will not the Apostle Paul justify him in Believing Contradictions, since he says in *Gal. 2. 16.* That Men believe in Christ, that they may be justified, and consequently that Faith is before Justification. But in *Rom. 4. 5.* He says, that God justifies the Ungodly, and by that it seems that Faith is after Justification.

We Answer, far be it from any that fear the Lord, to charge the Apostle with contradicting himself, or with giving any ground to believe Contradictions; for thus he writes to the *Corinthians*, *2 Cor. 1. 18.* As God is true, our Word toward you, was not Yea and Nay. That is, it did not contradict itself. And as he did not contradict himself in Preaching and Writing to the *Corinthians*, no more did he do it in Preaching and Writing to the *Romans* and *Galatians*. We must therefore so understand, *Rom. 4. 5.* ( of which the Question now is ) as not to make it contradict, *Gal. 2. 16.*

And that is no difficult matter to do. For we may easily conceive, that this form of Speech ( *God justifies the Ungodly* ) is like that of our Saviour, *Mar. 11. 5.* The Deaf hear. Now no Man is so foolish as to think that the Deaf remaining Deaf, did first hear, and then immediately after were cured of their Deafness; why then should we be so foolish, as to understand the Apostle as if he had said, that God justifies men whilst they remain ungodly without any real change wrought in them; and that immediately after he hath justified them, he first begins to make them Godly, and to sanctify them? We are persuaded it is much more rational to understand the Apostle the quite contrary way, to wit, that as the Deaf were first in Order of Nature and Causality cured of their Deafness, and then they did actually hear; so God first Works a Holy change in the Heart of a Sinner, and of an ungodly unpenitent Unbeliever makes him a godly penitent Believer, and then immediately justifies him by Faith in Christ. So that the Sinner whom God justifies, he is ungodly ( *Antecedenter sed non Concomitanter* ) that is, he was ungodly in the time before he was justified, but he is not ungodly either in the instant of Nature before, or in the instant of Time when he is justified, but on the contrary he is, through Grace, Godly both before and when he is justified.

2dly. We Answer, that the Man whom God justifies by Faith in Christ, is certainly Godly *Evangelically*, both in Order of Nature before he be justified, and at the time when he is justified; and yet at the same time he may be said to be *legally* ungodly: for understanding this, we are to consider, that the Man whom God justifies, may be compared with and judged by the Law of Works, or the Law of Faith; if he be compared with and judged by the Law of Works, he is found to be in himself an Ungodly Man, because he hath not perfectly kept, but hath frequently transgressed that Law, and forcan never be justified but is condemned by it. But if he be compared with and judged by the Law of Faith, the *Evangelical* Law, the Law of the New Covenant, he is found to be a Godly Man through Grace, to be *Evangelically* Godly, because he is just such a Man, as the Lord by the New Covenant and *Evangelical* Law requires him to be, that he may be first justified by Christ's Righteousness, imputed to him; that is, he is found to be a Man whom God hath blessed with a new Heart, and who is a true Penitent Believer, and that is, a Man *Evangelically* Godly.

Now there is no Contradiction at all in this, for the same Man at the same time, to be *legally* ungodly, and *Evangelically* Godly, because it is with respect to different Laws and Covenants, that such contrary things are affirmed of him. Let our

Author, if he please, consult *Turretine*, and he will find that, that Turret. In. Learned Calvinist saith expressly, *That a true Believer when he is justified by Faith in Christ, is, (impartim antecedenter, impartim respectu loci. 1. c. pag. 714. )* *Ante ad Justificationem, non autem concomitanter* ) Ungodly, partly antecedently ( and that is, because he was altogether ungodly in former times ),

times), *partly with respect to Justification*, (because he hath nothing in himself that can be the matter and cause of his Justification,) but he is *not* *concomitantly* Ungodly, that is, he doth not remain Ungodly, when God is justifying him, and till immediately after he be justified.

If our Author upon this should say to us, what he saith to his poor awakened Sinner, *That it is Non-sense, Ignorance and Pride*, to maintain *Let. p. 31.* that a Man must be in some measure Godly, in Disposition and Principle before he be Godly in Act, and that he must actually believe with a Godly Faith in Order of Nature before he be justified, for this is as much as to say, that a Man must be pretty well recovered before he make use of the Physician.

We should reply, (1.) That as for his Poor awakened Sinner, he makes a poor Fool of him, he puts what Words he pleases in his Mouth, and makes him say in effect, that if he first had Faith, before he first had Faith, then he would first believe before he had first believed; which we think no Man ever thought or said, nor is capable of saying, unless it be some poor Creature, that is, awakened out of his right Wits, or else it be such an one as our Author, who hath the Art of Believing or Writing Contradictions.

(2.) That he had need to take heed that he do not blaspheme our Saviour, who hath said that the Tree must be good, before the Fruit can be good, *Matth. 7. 16, 17, 18.* and *12. v. 33.* And that is as much as if he had said, what will hold, that there must be some Renovation of the inward Disposition of the Heart, before a Man do actually believe with a saving justifying Faith.

(3.) That if our Author will not believe us, let him believe his own beloved self, for he says, *Page 16.* That a Man is to believe that he may be justified. And that necessarily implies, that he must bring forth some good Fruit in order of Nature before he be justified, and in *Page 12.* He himself quotes, *Matth. 12. 33.* To prove that the Tree must be good before the Fruit be good.

(4.) We believe, that our Heavenly Physician comes first to us (ordinarily in the Ministry of the Word,) by his preventing Grace, and doth indeed recover us in part by curing the deadness and indisposableness of our Hearts, before we go to him by an actual saving justifying Faith, and thereby employ him for our Justification. Christ comes first to us by his Word and Spirit, and begins to cure us of our Spiritual deadness to any thing that is savingly good, before we go to him by actual justifying Faith, and be by him delivered from our Legal Death, in Justification by Faith in his Blood.

(5.) If our Author will yet go on to tell the People, that we teach them not to employ the Physician of Souls, till they have first pretty well cured themselves; we take Heaven and Earth to witness, that he belies us, and abuses the Simplicity of the People: for we believe in our Hearts, and confess with our Mouths to the Glory of Christ, the Physician of Souls, that it is he who by his Word, Spirit and Grace both begins, carries on and perfects the cure of all his select People; and that he doth it in the way and order set forth in his Word, of which we have here given the World an account, according to that measure of Light, which it hath pleased him of his rich Mercy, and free Grace to bestow upon us.

(6.) And lastly, We desire it may be considered, whether our Authors saying, that to tell the People, [they must begin to be Godly through Grace, by being Penitent Believers, in order to their being justified, is all one as to tell them, that they must be pretty well recovered and must cure themselves before they employ Christ the Physician of Souls] is our desire, People would consider, whether this be not a piece of Antinomian Cant, for it is certain that this is the Language of *Salisbury*, one of the greatest of that Sect in England, That the Promises belong to Sinners as Sinners, not as repenting or humbled Sinners; as is to be seen in *Galatians Shadows without Substance*, *Page 3.*

And again saith *Salisbury* (like our Author in this) *He that saith, that Men should*

*be first whole for the Physician, or Righteous for Pardon of Sin, or justified for Christ, or rather Sinners, Unrighteous, Ungodly.* And Gataker there Confutes this precious Stuff in *Pag. 54, 55, 56, 57, 58.* Again, *You Saltmarsh say, that every one who receives Christ, receives him in a sinful Condition, and consequently in an impenitent one.* Ibid. p. 73. And again, saith Saltmarsh (as our Author doth in *Pag. 11.* of his Letter) *Can any Man believe too soon? To which Question, Gataker Answers, No more shadows than he can repent too soon.* Thus we have at large answered every thing which we can find in the Letter that looks like an Objection or Argument against the Truth which we believe, according to the Scriptures.

But after all, it may be some will seriously put this Question? Is it likely that God will give us any Grace to sanctify us in any Kind or Degree, before he so love us as to justify us? To which we answer, that it is not only likely to be, but it certainly is so; that God loves us so far, as to make Conditional Promises to every one of his People, and so far as to give them for Christs sake Grace to begin to perform the Condition, before he so far love them, as *actually to justify them for Christs sake*; and that we say is a giving of Grace to sanctify us Initially, or to begin a Holy change in us before we be actually justified, and our Sins be forgiven us. This we have so clearly proved by Scripture and Reason, and the Testimony of the Synod of Dort; that there can be no just ground to doubt of it. And if it were otherwise, and we were justified before we were sanctified in any Kind or Degree, that is, before there were any Holy Change wrought in us, before we did begin to Convert and turn to God, before we had any Holy Inclination to believe, or any Holy Act of Faith and Repentance, and any Holy purpose to lead a new Life; then might we continue to be actually justified and pardoned without being in any Kind or Degree sanctified; because by the same Reason that Justification might be begun without any Kind or Degree of Sanctification, without any saving Faith and Repentance, it might be continued without them.

But all true Protestants (except Antinomians) even our Author himself, confess that Justification cannot be continued without any Sanctification, without any true Faith and Repentance, therefore Justification cannot be begun before and without them. If any should say, that this Argument may be retorted upon our selves, for we confess, that Sanctification begun in the Seed, Principle and Disposition, with Vital Acts of Faith and Repentance flowing from it, cannot be continued without Justification; therefore it follows by our own way of Reasoning, that they cannot be begun before Justification at first. We Answer, by denying the Consequence, because God hath expressly promised Justification through Christ to all, that from a new Heart believe and repent, and such Faith and Repentance are the Condition on which Justification is promised. But God hath no where promised either Initial or Progressive Sanctification on Condition of Justification. This shows that our Argument cannot be justly retorted upon us; because there is a peculiar Reason to the contrary, a Reason from the Promise of God that shews Sanctification, and Faith and Repentance cannot possibly be continued without Justification; whereas if Justification might be begun without any Degree of Sanctification, or Faith and Repentance, there can no sufficient Reason be given (we think) why it might not be long continued without any Degree of Sanctification, or any Act of Faith and Repentance. As for the promise of the Spirit to sanctify them who are justified, it is made to, and got by Faith; by our Authors Let. p. 12. own Confession; and so it presupposes Faith, and Faith presupposes Effectual Calling, and a Heart Renovation and Sanctification begun.

Now this makes for us, and shews that if Sanctification begun in the first change of the Heart, and first Acts of Faith and Repentance did not go before, there would be no place for the Promise of the Spirit after Justification, to carry on and per-



fect the begun Sanctification; because there would be no such Person in the World, as that Promise is made to, for the Promise of the Spirit to sanctify us throughly after Justification, is made to true Believers, which none can be till they be first initially sanctified by the Spirit of Christ, not yet inhabiting, but sitting up a Spiritual House for himself to inhabit; which when he hath done, and God hath thereupon justified us through the Righteousness of Christ imputed to us, then according to his Promise he gives us his sanctifying Spirit to dwell in us, and to carry on the work begun unto Perfection. Thus we have made good what we undertook, and have proved that there is some Preparation, some Holy Disposition and Qualification, some Holy Principle wrought in the Soul, and some Holy Acts of Faith and Repentance produced by the Soul in order to, and before Justification, and that thereupon Justification follows necessarily and infallibly according to the Promise of God, who cannot possibly lye and deceive. But as we said at the beginning, we hold this Priority of Initial Sanctification, and of the first vital Acts of Faith and Repentance, no farther than is necessary to verifie the expressions and sense of Holy Scripture concerning them; and so we conclude this part of our Answer with that of the Learned Turretine, [*Licet Penitentia, &c.*] *Although Remission of Sins be Promised to Repentance, because it ought to Infit. Theol. accompany Faith, and to be in him who is justified as a certain Condition Elenst. part. required of him, because God cannot pardon Sin unto one who is Impenitent; 2. p. 744. it doth not follow, that it can be said to justify with Faith, because it Contributes nothing either Meritoriously or Instrumentally unto the Act of Justification. That is, because as we say, Repentance is only a qualifying, but not a Receptive, Applicative Condition of Justification.*

*An Appendix of the third Section, concerning Dispositions previous to Regeneration, and through Conversion.*

WE Remember, that in our Preliminaries to the forefaid Discourse, concerning the Preparations and Dispositions that are Antecedent to Justification, we said that as there are some, which have a necessary infallible Connection with Justification, (of which we have spoken already) so there are others which have not such a necessary infallible Connection with it: As to this last sort, we do not say, that they are Dispositions and Preparations, with which Men are always, and without which they are never, nor ever can possibly be justified; yet we think that ordinarily they do precede Justification and Effectual Vocation too, in all that are Effectually Called and Justified.

All such Dispositions and Preparations, our Author denies in the 12th Page of his Letter, and pretends that Calvin, the Church of England, and Westminster Assembly of Divines, do all concur with him therein. We do not at all wonder, that he denies all Preparations and Dispositions before Effectual Calling, and the first saving Conversion, since (as we have seen) he denies that there is any good wrought in us, or done by us before Justification. And as for Preparations and Dispositions before Conversion, if he would or could assure us, that he denies them in no other sense, than all his Authors, Calvin, the Church of England and Assembly of Divines do deny them, we should have no controversy with him about that matter; but we think that he is of a different Judgment, and either doth not understand in what sense it is that they deny them, or if he understand them aright, he doth not believe them, or if he believe some part that he likes, yet he doth not believe all that they say concerning those Dispositions, previous to Regeneration and Conversion.

That it may be clearly known, what our Judgment is concerning those Preparations that are ordinarily previous to Regeneration and Conversion; we shall, (1.) Name them, and shew what they are. (2.) Declare what our Opinion is concerning them. (3.) Shew that our Opinion concerning them, is neither new nor singular, but what we believe in this matter, we have learned and received from the most eminent Pastors of the Reformed Churches, whereof many lived and died in the true Faith, before many of us were born.

First then to Name them, there is (1.) An Illumination of the Mind by the Word and Spirit of God, by means whereof Sinners come to know more of God and of his Word, particularly of his Law, than ever they did before.

(2.) There is a Conviction of their Conscience, that they have frequently and heinously transgressed Gods Law in habit and Act, in Heart and Life. And by their Sins Original and Actual are fallen under the curse of the broken Law, and the Wrath of the offended Law-giver.

(3.) There thence ariseth in them a fear of the Wrath and Vengeance of an offended God.

(4.) Thereupon they begin to be sorry, that by their Sin and Folly, they have brought themselves into such a dangerous Condition, and to humble themselves before God; if so be that his Wrath may be turned away from them.

(5.) The Light, whereby the Word and Spirit had given them a clearer Knowledge of God and of themselves, than ever they had before, and of their obnoxiousness to Gods Everlasting Wrath and Vengeance, is increased by the Gospel, and thereby is given them some Discovery and Knowledge of Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of God, as one whom God hath ordained to be the Saviour of lost Sinners of Mankind, and to reconcile them unto God by satisfying his offended Justice, and by Meriting for them his Grace and Favour.

(6.) Upon this Knowledge of Christ, there follows some kind of common Faith and Hope, that it is possible for them in particular to get their Sins pardoned and their Souls saved, through the Mediation of Jesus Christ, *Mark 10. 27.*

(7.) Then there ariseth some Joy in them, from the foresaid Faith and Hope of the possibility of their obtaining to great Salvation, from the Curse of the Law and Wrath of the Law-giver, *Mark 6. 20. Luke 8. 13.*

(8.) This Joy and Gladness of Heart, arising from the Hope of the Possibility of their obtaining to great Salvation, makes them desire that that possibility may be reduced into Act, and that they may actually obtain the possible Salvation.

(9.) The desire of actually obtaining it, makes them in some sort willing to use the means appointed by God for obtaining to desirable an end; whereupon they give themselves to consider, What those means are, and how to use them; and from that they proceed to read and hear the Word of God more than formerly, to pray unto God themselves, and to desire the Prayers of others, for the pardon of their Sins, and the Salvation of their Souls.

(10.) And lastly, They endeavour to reform their Lives, by abstaining from the outward Commission of those Sins, which they have been most grossly guilty of; and which do most burden their Consciences.

These are the Dispositions, which are previous to Regeneration and a through Conversion, for we humbly conceive it possible for Sinners to go thus far towards, before they attain unto, a saving Conversion.

Secondly, To declare what our Opinion is concerning these Dispositions previous to Conversion, (1.) We do not think, that they are all absolutely necessary on Gods part, as if he could not possibly Convert a Sinner immediately without such foregoing Dispositions. We know nothing to the contrary, but that God can come unto a Sinner by the powerful Operation of his Spirit and Grace (if he please,) in the midst of his greatest and deepest unpreparedness; and turn him from his

his Sin and bring him to Christ by saving Conversion immediately. But yet,

(1.) We do not think, that this is Gods usual way of drawing Sinners to Christ, for though such previous Dispositions to Conversion be not absolutely necessary on Gods part; yet they are ordinarily necessary on mens part, especially in Countreys where God hath planted Churches, hath sent Ministers to preach the Gospel publicly, and hath established a course of outward visible means; we think, that in such places, though God hath not tied himself to means, yet he hath tied men to the use of them, and that they have never so much Reason to expect Gods special help and Effectual Assistance for their saving Conversion, as when they are using their best endeavours, in the use of the means which God himself has ordained for the communicating of his saving Grace to lost Sinners of Mankind.

(3.) The foresaid Preparations, which we believe to be ordinarily necessary on mans part, we do not judge to be the product of meer natural Light and Power in Man, but to be the effect of common Grace; which Grace we call common, because not only the Elect, but the Non elect also are made partakers of it in the Visible Church; and we hold it to be of a supernatural Order of Beings, whereby those who are made partakers of it, are enabled to do things that are above their meer natural Capacity, and which they could not possibly do of themselves, without that supernatural Help and Assistance.

(4.) We do not believe, that any thing, or all that man doth by the help of the said supernatural common Grace, is Meritorious either (*ex condigno* or *ex congruo*) of Congnity or of Congruity, of special saving Grace, so as God should be obliged, and could not with Honour but give special saving Grace to those unto whom he hath first given the foresaid common Grace.

(5.) Yet we think, that God doth not take away the said common Grace from any to whom he hath given it, till they have first forfeited it, and provoked God to take it from them by their neglecting to improve it, as they ought and might have done. For we are of Dr. Owens Opinion in this matter, as he expresseth it in his Discourse concerning the Holy Spirit, Pag. 198. *Where special Grace, and real Conversion is not attained (to wit, by means of common Grace, and its effects on the Soul) it is always from the Interposition of an Act of Willfulness and Stubbornness in those Enlightened and Convicted, they do not sincerely improve what they have received, and saints, not merely for want of Strength to proceed, but by a free Act of their own Will, they refuse the Grace which is further tendered unto them in the Gospel.* From this Passage of Dr. Owens, we see that according to him the only culpable Reason, why those who have the foresaid common Grace, and thereby go so far in the way to Conversion, but yet do not attain the end, do not arrive at special Grace and saving Conversion thereby, is because they were grossly wanting in their Duty to God and themselves, of improving common Grace as far as it would go.

(6.) Though we thus shew, that men themselves are the only culpable Cause of their not obtaining special Grace and saving Conversion thereby, yet we do not say on the other hand, that the Elect are the laudable Cause of their insalubly obtaining special Grace and saving Conversion thereby. No, no, we are no such Persons, we hold no such Opinions; but are of Prosper's Mind, and say with him, *Quantumlibet impiorum malignitas accusetur, resistens gratie dei, nunquid probabuntur, eam quibus est collata meruisse? aut illa virtus gratie, que sibi quos vultis subditis, convertere eos qui inconvincibiles permanserunt, non potuit? tales fuerunt qui sunt attriti, quales Cap. 25.* *Prosper de Vocat. Gentium, lib. 1.* *bi qui in sua duritia sunt retiti, sed illis tribuit gratia stupenda, quod voluit, istis tribuit veritas iusta quod debuit, ut iudicium Dei magis inscrutabile fieri Ele- Aione gratia, quam in retributione iustitia.* How much soever the Malignity of the Wicked, which resists the Grace of God be accused, can it ever be proved, that

that they to whom special Grace is given; have deserved or merited it? Or that powerful Efficacy of Grace, which hath subdued to it self whom it would; could it not convert those who remained unconverted? They who are drawn to the Lord were such as those are who are left in their hardness. But wonderful astonishing Grace gave what it would to those that are converted; and just Truth, that, is the True and Just God rendered what he owed unto the others who are unconverted: So that the Judgment of God is more unsearchable in the election of Grace, than in the Retribution of Justice. That is, it is more difficult to give a reason why God gives special effectual converting Grace to such and such particular persons, who could never deserve to have it, than why he with-holds it from other persons who have really deserved to want it.]

This is the true meaning of the last clause of that excellent Writer, whereby we see that the Father, on the one hand assigns the just demerits of the ungodly Resisters of Gods Grace, for the reason of their not being converted by special and victorious Grace; but on the other hand he acknowledges that no reason can be given why the like resistance is overcome and taken away, in the Elect, and they are savingly converted, by discriminating Grace; but that it is Gods good will and pleasure to have it so; of the same judgment are we in this matter, and as we derive the reason on the part of Gods Select People, why they rather than others are infallibly converted by special Grace, from the meer will and pleasure of God, (because we know no other reason of it), so we ascribe unto God all the Glory of it, saying with our Blessed Saviour; *We thank thee O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these things from the Wise and Prudent, and hast revealed them unto Babes. Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.* Mat. II. 25, 26.

Thus we have briefly declared what our opinion is, concerning the Preparations and Dispositions which ordinarily go before saving Conversion, in some more, in others less, in some for a longer, in others for a shorter time; but in all so as to enlighten, convince, and humble them.

Thirdly, Now in the third and last place we shall show that our opinion concerning them, is neither new nor singular, but that what we believe in this matter, we have learned and received from the most Eminent Pastors of the Reformed Churches, whereof many lived and died in the true Faith, before many of us were born.

And our first Witness is *Calvin*, who writing against *Pighius*, doth plainly confess that Sinners are disposed and prepared by the Grace of Gods Holy Spirit, before they be savingly converted and justified. His words are these, [*Neque verò hoc modo preparari hominem ad recipiendum justitiâ domini, negamus; sed Spiritus Sancti directione, non suo ingenio, &c.* But neither do we deny that man is thus prepared to receive the gift of Righteousness; but it is by the direction of the Holy Spirit, and not by his own natural understanding and strength. Christ doth not call any to come unto him, but such as labour and are heavy laden: But yet it is he himself who makes us to feel our burden, and to groan under it. We confess that the common Proverb is most true, that it is the only hopeful beginning of a cure, where the sick Person is sensible of his Disease. Therefore that Christ may become thy Physician, it behoves thee to acknowledge and be sensible of thy Disease.

Again in his Institutions, he expressly confesses that there are some common operations of the Spirit, whereof the Non-Elect are partakers in the visible Church. *Experientia (inquit) ostendit; reprobos interdum simili ferè sensu atque Electos affici; ut ne suo quidem judicio quicquam ab electis differant, &c.* Experience (says Calvin.) shews that the Reprobate are sometimes affected with a sense and feeling (to wit of Spiritual things)

*Idem Instit.*  
lib. 3. cap. 2.  
§. 11.

\*Reprobate

'things), almost like to that which is in the Elect; in so much that in their own Judgment, they differ not at all from the Elect. Wherefore there is no absurdity at all in this, that by the Apostle, a taste of Heavenly Gifts; and by Christ, a temporary Faith is ascribed unto them.

Thus Calvin, who there shews that in the Elect after saving Conversion and Justification, there is always something of a higher nature which distinguisheth them from the Non-elect, and then adds, [Sed hoc minime obstat quin illa inferior Spiritus operatio cursum suum habeat etiam in reprobis.] 'Yet this doth no ways hinder; but that that inferiour operation of the Spirit hath its course even in the Reprobate. And more he hath to this purpose; whereby it evidently appears that in his Judgment, there is such a thing as we call common Grace, which oftentimes makes such a change upon the Unregenerate, that it is hard to distinguish them from the truly Regenerate.

We might also alledge to this purpose, the Testimonies of *Obaninus* in his Examination of the Council of Trent; of the Divines of *Wittenberg*, in the Conference at *Allenburg*, of *Pareus* writing against *Bellarmine* about Justification; of *Paulus Ferris* in his Specimen of Ecclesiastical Orthodox Divinity; and of others, acknowledging and maintaining that there are such preparations and dispositions wrought in Sinners, by the Grace of Gods Spirit, before their Regeneration or Conversion and Justification; but because we have been longer already than we first intended, we will pass them; and come to the Testimony of the Synod of *Dord*, which ought to be of more weight with us, than any other Testimonies of Protestant Divines, that can be brought either for or against those previous dispositions we speak of. And from amongst all that might make for our purpose in that famous Synod, we will single out, and content our selves with what our own *British Divines* have said for this opinion, in their Collegiate suffrage approved by the Synod, and Recorded in its Acts. And forasmuch as the sake of our Country-Men who cannot have recourse to the Original *Synodical* given to examine our Translation, we will (as we have done before) *quote* make use of the old *English Translation* which some of them may have seen, have, or may meet with it. Thus then they begin.

#### Of those things that go before Conversion.

##### The First Position.

There are certain external Works ordinarily required of men before they be brought to the State of Regeneration or Conversion, which are, *some* On the 3d. to be performed freely by them, and other whiles freely omitted, as to go to Church, to hear the word Preached, or the like. This they prove from *Exiles*, p. 68, Rom. 10. 12. *As also*, from Reason and Experience, and other Scriptures, *Exiles*, p. 71, Mark 6. 20. Acts 13. 46. Psal. 58. 4, 5.

72, 73, 74.

&c.

##### The Second Position.

There are certain inward Effects going before Conversion, or Regeneration, which by the power of the Word and Spirit, are stirred up in the hearts of Men not yet justified; such as are, a knowledge of Gods will, a sense of sin, a fear of Punishment, a bechinking of freedom, or deliverance, and some hope of pardon.

The Grace of God is not wont to bring men to the State of Justification (in which we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ) by a sudden Enthusiasm, or Rapture, but by divers degrees of foregoing Actions naming, and preparing them through the Ministry of the Word. (1st.) This we may see in those, who upon hearing S. Peters Sermon, feel the burden of their sin, are stricken with fear and sorrow, desire deliverance

and



And, *consequenter* from *Acts of Pardon*, All which may be collected of *those words*, *Acts 2. 37.* When they heard, they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and the rest of the Apostles, Men and Brethren, what shall we do?

(2.) This the very nature of the thing requires, for as in the natural Generation of man there are many vicious Dispositions, which go before the bringing in of the term, so also in the spiritual Generation, by many affords of Grace, which must go before, do we come to the spiritual Nativity.

(3.) To conclude, this appears by the Instruments which God uses for the Regenerating of men. For he employeth the Ministry of Men, and the Instruments of the Word, 1 Cor. 1. 17. I have begotten you through the Gospel. But if God would Regenerate and justify a wicked man immediately, being prepared by no knowledge, no sorrow, no desire, no hope of pardon, there would be no need of the Ministry of men, nor of the Preaching of the Word for this purpose. Neither would any care be upon the Ministers dividing the Word aright, fully and wisely. First, To wound the Consciences of their Auditors with the terrors of the Law, then to raise them up with the promises of the Gospel, and to exhort them to beg Faith and Repentance at Gods Hand, by Prayers and Tears.

### The Third Position.

Whom God doth thus prepare by his Spirit through the means of the Word, he doth he truly and seriously call and invite to Faith and Conversion.

By the nature of the benefit offered, and by the most evident Word of God, we must judge of those helps of Grace, which are bestowed upon men, and not by the hour, or the even. Therefore when the Gospel of its own nature calls men to Repentance and Salvation, when the Incitements of Divine Grace tend the same way, we must not suppose any thing is done feignedly by God. This is proved by those earnest Pacherical Intreaties; 2 Cor. 5. 20. We pray you in Christs stead, be ye reconciled to God. Those exhortations, 1 Cor. 6. 1. We beseech you that your reconciliation with God is in vain. Those Exhortations, Gal. 1. 6. I marvel that you are so soon removed from him that called you to the Grace of Christ. Those Promises; Revel. 3. 20. Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him.

But if God should not seriously invite all, to whom he vouchsafes this gift of his Word and Spirit, to a serious Conversion, surely, both God should deceive many, whom he calls in his Sons Name, and the Messengers of the Evangelical Promises, might be accused of false witness, and those who being called to Conversion, do neglect to obey, might be more excuseable, for that calling by the Word and Spirit, cannot be thought to leave men unexcusable, which is only exhibited to this end, to make them unexcusable.

### The Fourth Position.

Those whom God hath thus disposed, he doth not forsake, nor cease to further them in the true way to Conversion, before he be forsaken of them by a voluntary neglect, or repulse of this initial or entering Grace.

The Talent of Grace given by God, is taken from none, but from him who forfeits it by his own fault; Mat. 25. 28. Hence is it that in the Scriptures every where we are admonished, that we resist not the Spirit, that we quench not the Spirit, that we receive not the Grace of God in vain, that we depart not from God; Heb. 3. 12. Yea, that is most evidently noted to be the reason of Gods forsaking man, because God is first forsaken by man; Prov. 1. 24, &c. Because I have called, and you refused, I will laugh at your Calamity.

2 Chron. 34. 20. Because ye have forsaken the Lord, He hath also forsaken you. But never in

in the Scripture, is there the least mention (or Intimation) that God is willing, or that he will at any time, without some fault of man going before, take away from any Man the aid of his exciting Grace, or any help which he hath once conferred towards Man's Conversion; or (as it is in the Original) that it is ordained unto Man's Conversion.

Thus the Orthodox Fathers, who had to do with the *Pelagians*, say: "It is the Will of God, that we continue in a good Will; who be so willing, fore he be forsaken, forsakes no Man, and oft-times Converts men on August 24. any, that forsake him." These are the Words of *Proper* in An Answer of Answer to the seventh Objection of one *Vincentius* against the Doctrine of *Augustine* and *Proper*: "etiam non solum in bono sed et in malo."

The Fifth Position. Complaints his morning too have wrought in themselves and of men evil but much of holiness than of holiness. These foregoing effects wrought in the Minds of Men by the Power of the Word and Spirit, may be killed and utterly extinguished by the fault of a rebellious Will; and in many cases, so that some, in whose Hearts by the virtue of the Word and Spirit, some Knowledge of Divine Truth, some Sorrow for Sin, some Desire and Care of Deliverance have been implanted, are changed to the quite contrary, they Reject and Hate the Truth, they give themselves up to their Lusts, are hardened in their Sins, and without all desire of redemption from them: Rise and Putrify in them.

2 Pet. 2. 21. It had been better for them not to have known the way of Righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the Holy Commandments delivered unto them; But it is happened so them according to the true Prophecy: The Dog is turned to his own vomit again. Job. 5. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

#### The Sixth Position.

The very Elect in those Acts going before Regeneration, do not carry themselves so, but that for their Negligence and Reliance, they may be justly reprimanded and forsaken of God, but such is the special Mercy of God towards them, that though they do for a while repel and choke the Grace of God exciting and enlightening them; yet God doth urge them again and again; nor doth he cease to stir them forward, till he have thoroughly subdued them to his Grace; and let them in the State of regenerate Sons.

John 6. 37. All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. Jerem. 14. 7. O Lord, though our Iniquities testify against us, do thou it for thy Names sake, for our backslidings are many. Jerem. 32. 39. I will give them one Heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever. And Phil. 1. 6. He that hath begun a good work in you, will perform it, until the day of Jesus Christ.

But if God should not go on thus to follow, even those that hold off and retire from him, no Calling would be effectual, there would be no Filial Adoption, and even Election itself, grounded upon the good Pleasure of God, would be frustrated.

Since the Fall of Man, God would have it ascribed to his Grace, that a Man doth come unto him, neither will he have it ascribed, Aug. de bono, for any thing but his Grace, that a Man doth not go from him. perfect.

know it boD said: 'notwithstanding the' *The Seventh Position.* and this is the first of the no-  
 rews that are to be used in the Synod. and this is the first of the no-

Those that are not elected, when they resist the Spirit of God and his Grace,  
 in these Acts foregoing Regeneration, and extinguish the initial effects of the same  
 in themselves, by the fault of their own free will, are justly forsaken by God,  
 whensoever it pleaseth him: Whom by their own fault is forsaken, we truly  
 pronounce to remain by the same demerit, hardened and unconverted.

We think it to be without all doubt, that no mortal man doth so carry  
 himself toward God, but that either by omitting that which he should have  
 done, or committing that which he should not have done, he deserves to have  
 the Grace taken from him which he hath. Which ground being forelay'd, it is clear,  
 that God without all injustice, or cruelty, may take from such men that Grace  
 which he hath extended to them, and leave them to the hardness of their own  
 hearts; *Rom. 9. 18. He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will  
 be hardeneth.* God also oweth this to no man, that when he resists enlightning  
 and exciting Graces, and serves his own lust, he should then lose them and multiply  
 him by that special Grace which no hard heart resists: *Rom. 11. 39. Who hath  
 first given unto him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?* Again he that is thus  
 forsaken, being not converted, perishes through his own fault: *John 8. 12. I say, these things that ye might be saved, and ye will not: come ye, then, shall ye not  
 have life;* *Acts 28. 27. The heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull  
 of hearing, and their eyes have they closed, lest they should be converted, and it should be  
 said to them, ye see us now, and ye have not seen us before, and ye have not seen us before.*

Thus our Divines in the Synod, and with the approbation of the Synod of  
 Dorset, gave their Judgment at large, and the grounds and reasons of it concerning  
 the dispositions which are ordinarily previous to Regeneration and saving Conver-  
 sation; all which we have transcribed word for word, out of their Collegiate  
 suffrage, that the world may see that our opinion concerning Preparations and  
 Dispositions, previous to saving Conversation, is neither new nor singular, but is  
 the very same with that of the Synod of Dort, from whom we learned it accord-  
 ing to the Scripture.

Now we will shew that this same Doctrine of our Divines in the Synod of  
 Dort, is received and approved by those very Divines whom our Authour in his  
 Letter would suborn to be Witnesses against us in the Controversie between him and  
 us; we shall demonstrate this by the Testimonies of Dr. Ames, Dr. Twiss and Dr. Owen,  
 who do all three expressly approve of the suffrage of our Britain Divines in this matter.

(1.) Dr. Ames hath an intire Disputation against *Macoveius*, concerning the pre-  
 paration of a Sinner to Conversion. It and some other Dissertations of his, are  
 ordinarily bound up with his short Scholastical reply to *Grevinghoeius*.

In that Disputation, after he had in the first *Position* rejected (as we have done)  
 all Dispositions any wise meritorious of Justification; in the second *Position* he says,  
 That because there are no meritorious Dispositions, for that reason so to hate the very name  
 (Disposition), as without any distinction to take away and deny all Preparatory affections and  
 motions in a Sinner, whereby God makes way for his Congruous Conversion, and in  
 some sort puts him in an order and course of Actions, which have a tendency unto Re-  
 generation; this is as judiciously and wisely done, as if one should absolutely deny that there  
 are any good Works at all, because meritorious works are justly condemned.

And in his 3d. *Position*, But we doubt not to assert, (says Ames,) that in every Sinner  
 of ripe years who is to be Converted, ordinarily some dispositions tending to Conversion,  
 go before it, altho in a different degree, according to the wise dispensation of God.

And in his 5th. *Position*, *De istis (inquit) nihil certius est, quam quod in Syn. Dord:  
 ad art. 3. & 4. Proposuerunt Theologi Britannici, sunt quadam opera, &c.* Concerning  
 those Dispositions (says Ames) Nothing is more certain than that which the Brit-

our Divines proposed in the Synod of Dort, upon the 3d. and 4th. Articles. There are some external works ordinarily required of men, before they be brought to the State of Regeneration or Conversion. And there are some internal Effects previous to Conversion or Regeneration, which by the power of the Word and Spirit are stirred up in the hearts of those who are not yet justified, such are the knowledge of Gods will, sense of sin, fear of Punishment, thought of deliverance, some hope of pardon. For as in the natural Generation of man, there are many previous dispositions, so also in the Spiritual Generation, &c. Thus Ames greatly approves what we have quoted before at large out of the Suffrage. Then he quotes Perkins for the same opinion in his cases of Conscience; Book 1. c. 1. In his 8th. Position, 'So great (says Ames) is the evidence of this Truth, that he who opposeth it, by one rash Sentence seems to blot out the whole first part of the Catechism, with a great part of the Second; and also to abrogate and make void the whole Ministry of the Word in order to the Conversion of Sinners. For as there is no use of the Ministry with respect to the Regenerate but that they may be prepared for, and brought unto Glory, so there is no use of it with respect to the Unregenerate, but that they may be prepared for, and brought unto Conversion.

In his 9th. Position, he brings two places of Scripture to prove that there are such dispositions previous to Conversion; Mark 12. 34. *Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God; Acts 1. 37. When they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts.* Upon both these places of Scripture he quotes Calvin, *Observing from them that there are Preparations and Dispositions previous to saving Conversion.* Let Scholars consult the Author himself, and read the whole Disputation if they please. What we have transcribed out of it is abundantly sufficient to demonstrate that Ames is on our side, and approved the said Doctrine of our British Divines in the Synod of Dort.

(1.) Dr. Twiss, in his answer to Mr. Heard, his Book called, *Gods love unto Mankind*, discoursing there of what our Divines at Dort, on the Fifth Article, said concerning the change which by Gods Word and Spirit is wrought in the minds, affections and manners of men, even of the Non-Elect, before Conversion and Justification; he says Expressly: 'That the dispositions which God grants unto men before saving Conversion, as they are in the Elect, they are preparations to further Grace; and so in the Reprobate they might be preparations to further Grace, if it pleased God so to ordain as to bring them on forward to Justification, and true Sanctification conjunct therewith, and thereby unto Salvation.

From which words we observe two things, (1.) That Dr. Twiss absolutely asserts that the previous Dispositions which God by his Word and Spirit works in the Elect before Conversion and Regeneration, are preparations to further Grace.

(2.) As for the like Dispositions wrought by the Word and Spirit in the Reprobate who are never Converted and Regenerated, he affirms not that they are *de facto*, but that they might be in them also, preparations unto further Grace, upon supposition that it pleased God to give them the like special effectual saving Grace which he gives unto the Elect.

And afterwards in the same Book he approves what our Divines lay on the 3d. and 4th. Articles concerning previous dispositions, and which we have quoted out of them at large, only he saith, he doth not sufficiently understand the last Clause of their Argument to prove their third Position, which is, *That calling by the Word and Spirit, cannot be thought to leave men unexcusable, which is only excusable in this way, to make them unexcusable.* This is the only thing in this Dispute of theirs concerning previous Dispositions which Dr. Twiss pretends not to understand. Yet at the same time he says, *gainst Heard* That he thinks (by Gods making men unexcusable) they meant, *Dr. 1. 2.* Gods taking away all excuse from men, as that thereby they be-  
come  
into Justification.

come faulty and culpable before God, to be in a state of impenitent excuse, which he adds "in this sense" viz. in the ordinary meaning of the word *impenitent*, and then what I take to be their meaning, namely this, that if God, making them that if they believe he will accept them, and that they shall be saved, did not indeed mean that he would in that case accept and save them, then there were no reason why they should be accounted faulty, and condemned for not believing. Thus says he in a desire exactly to conform my text to the judgment of these "Worshipful" of our Church, made choice of by our Sovereign, to be sent in so honourable an Ambassage, to countenance that famous Synod of the most Reformed Churches: I have made bold to interpret them, and to show my concurrence with them, &c. By this passage it is evident that he approved all they wrote on that head of dispositions previous to Regeneration. For he scrupled only one Clause, which he so interpreted as to remove the ground of the scruple, and then declared his Concurrence with them in that which he took to be the true sense of their words, and indeed he needed not to have made any such scrupulous Objection, as he there doth; for undoubtedly our Divines used the word *impenitent* in no other sense, but what he yields to at last and approves of. *It will* That that calling by the Word and Spirit, cannot be thought to leave men faulty by taking away their excuse, which is only *designed* and exhibited to make them faulty for want of an excuse. It appears plainly by the whole Series and Contexture of their Discourse, that this was the meaning of our most Learned and judicious Divines; and consequently that there is no difference between *it will* and them in this matter. Especially it is most evident that *it will* and they exactly agree, that in the Elect the foretold Dispositions before Conversion, are preparations to further Grace, even to the special Grace of saving Conversion itself. And this is the main thing that we now enquire after; *it will*, Whether there be any preparatory Dispositions in the Elect before Conversion?

*Yondy, Dr. Owen* also in his Discourse in *Falls*, concerning the Holy Spirit, quotes the judgment of our *Bilham Drotel* at the Synod of *Down*, concerning the foretold dispositions previous to Regeneration, and approves it, and goes the same way that they do in discouraging of them, and shewing what they are and how they are wrought. *Dr. Owen* says he, in reference unto the work of Regeneration, *Book 3. Cap. 3. are certain previous and preparatory works, or workings in* and upon the Souls of men, that are antecedent and dispositive, *195. 193.* to it: but yet Regeneration doth not consist in them, nor can it *194. 191.* be educed out of them. This is for the substance of the *196.* *Mon* of the Divines of the Church of England, at the Synod of *Down*, whereof died Bishops, and others of them were dignified in the *hierarchy*. I mention it, that those (new Divines) by whom these things are *helped*, may a little consider whose allies they trample on and scorn.

Then the Dr. tells us, (1.) That he speaks not of the Regeneration of Infants, but of the adult. (2.) That the dispositions previous to their Regeneration are not formal but *material* dispositions. (3.) That some of them are attainable by the power of nature alone, such as are outward attendance on the dispensation of the Word, and a diligent stretching of mind in attending on the means of Grace, to understand and receive the things revealed, and declared as the mind and will of God: and he says, that the omitting or neglecting to use this natural ability is the principal occasion and cause of the eternal ruin of the Souls of the *Graceless* of men, *in whom* is amongst whom the Gospel is preached, *John 3. 19.* (4.) That there are certain *Internal Spiritual* Effects wrought in and upon the Souls of Men, whereof the Word preached, is the immediate Instrumental cause, which



which <sup>is</sup> reducible unto Three Heads, (1.) Illumination. (2.) Conviction. (3.) Reformation. The first of these respects the Mind only. The second the Mind, Conscience and Affections. And the third the Life and Conversation. These are attained by the inward influence of the Holy Spirit upon mens' souls, concurring with outward means to make it effectual unto those ends.

All these things may be wrought in the minds of men by the dispensation of the Word, and yet the work of Regeneration be never perfected in them. Yea, although they are good in themselves, and fruits of the kindness of God towards us; they may not only be <sup>of</sup> <sup>no</sup> <sup>use</sup> <sup>unto</sup> <sup>any</sup> <sup>spiritual</sup> <sup>advantage</sup>, but also be added to our great disadvantages. Then Ps. 106. The Doctrine (says he) concerning these things, hath been verily <sup>branded</sup>, <sup>disturb'd</sup> and <sup>upset</sup>, by many Learned Divines, and Religious Ministers of the Gospel. And that Light which they received into them from the infallible Word of God, they joined those experiences which they had observed in their own hearts, and the Consciences of others with whom they had to do, which were suitable thereunto, <sup>unto</sup> the dispensation of the truth, according to the measure of the Gift of the Grace of Words, which they severally received, they had an useful and fruitful Ministry in the World, to the Converting of many unto God. <sup>But</sup> we have lived to see all these things <sup>descried</sup> and <sup>rejected</sup>. Thus Dr. Owen concerning Dispositions previous to Regeneration, whose sense upon the whole, we have here briefly and faithfully represented unto all into whose hands this may come. And in the first and latter part of this long quotation, we have transcribed his own words.

By all which we see that Dr. Owen received and approved as true, good and useful, the fore said Doctrine of the English Divines at the Synod of Dort, concerning Dispositions and Preparations before Regeneration, and seems to have said it with some grief, that he had lived to see all these things decayed and rejected, to wit, by some Arminian Divines of the Church of England. And would it not have grieved him a little more, to have seen all these things decayed and rejected also by Nonconformists, that pretend to be the only party of Protestants who adhere to the old pure Doctrine of the best Reformed Churches; when at the same time and in the same thing they join with the new Divines, (as Dr. Owen expressly calls them) that is, with the Arminians, against the Synod of Dort, and the old Doctrine of the Church of England. But you may say, doth our Author do so? doth he decay and reject those Preparations and Dispositions before Regeneration and Conversion, which our Divines maintained in the Synod of Dort, and which Dr. Owen maintained after them against modern Arminians? We answer, if he doth not decay and reject them, what means all that which he writes in the 13. page of his Letter against all Preparations and Dispositions before a saving and justifying Faith? Surely he took wrong measures, if he thought that those dispositions might be admitted before Regeneration and Conversion, but not before a saving and justifying Faith. For it is simply impossible, and implies a contradiction, that they can be before Regeneration and first saving Conversion, but they must be also before saving and justifying Faith. So that either, he must contradict himself in his usual manner, if he hold the fore said dispositions to be before Regeneration and Conversion, but not before saving justifying Faith; or if he affirm that they are neither before Regeneration and Conversion, nor yet before saving Faith, which is necessarily implied in Regeneration and Conversion; then indeed he doth not contradict himself, but he doth that which is worse, he contradicts the Truth, and the Synod of Dort, with Dr. Ames, Dr. Twiss, and Dr. Owen, who all maintain this Truth, that the said preparatory dispositions are before Regeneration and Conversion, and so, before a saving justifying Faith.

If he says that he doth not deny them to be before Regeneration and saving justifying Faith, nor to be dispositive thereunto, but that he only denies them to be dispositive unto Justification.

We Answer, (1.) That then he yields the Cause, and comes open to us; the we do not say that any thing before Regeneration and having justifying Faith, is or can be immediately Dispositive unto Justification; but that the *fore said* Preparations are Dispositive unto Regeneration and Conversion, which are an Order before Justification. (2.) Then he is as much bound to Answer his own Arguments against their being Dispositive unto Justification, as we are for his Argument; is this, that nothing a Man doth before having justifying Faith, can dispose him for Justification, because it is all Sin, and Sin can never dispose a Man for Justification.

Now if this be true, if all that a Man doth before having justifying Faith, be Sin, If it be vain labour, and an *Acting of Sin*, and therefore cannot dispose him for Justification; then for the same Reason, it cannot dispose him for Regeneration and having justifying Faith; for it is self evident, that that which is vain labour, and nothing but Sin, can no more dispose a Man for Regeneration, than for Justification.

Indeed Sin can dispose a Man for nothing, but for Sin, and Punishment; and if that which is vain labour could dispose a Man for Regeneration and Conversion, it would at once be both vain labour, and not vain labour; it would be vain labour, for so it is said and supposed to be; and it would not be vain labour, because it disposes a Man for Regeneration and Conversion; and that is not vain labour which is useful to so good an end, as the Regenerating and Converting of a Man is.

But (1.) our Author Objects the 13th Article of the Church of England. To which we Answer, (1.) That the English Divines at the Synod of Dort, understood the Articles of their own Church much better than our Author doth, and yet they found nothing in the 13th Article against Dispositions before Conversion, wrought in Sinners by the Word and Spirit of Christ.

(2.) The Article speaks only of Works done by Infidels without any Grace of Christ at all, and without any Inspiration of the Spirit. Now it is Confessed, that such Works are not pleasant to God, nor are they Dispositive unto Regeneration and Conversion. But the Works which the Synod of Dort, Ames, Westminster and Orono affirm to be Preparatory and Dispositive unto Regeneration and Conversion, are not such Works, they are not works done by the meer Power of Nature without any supernatural Grace at all; but they are Works done by the Power of the Word and Spirit of Christ, they are Works done by a certain *Inferior* kind of supernatural Grace of Christ, and Inspiration of the Spirit of Christ, which is sufficient to elevate and raise the Faculties of a Sinner something above its natural Capacity, to the producing of such Actions, which though they be not *lawfully* good and so not pleasing to God unto Justification and Salvation; yet they are *materially* good, and *Relatively* good, *in Order* to the will and end for which God has ordained them, that is, they are *Dispositive* good; they have from God so much goodness as makes them fit to be a *Material Disposition* of the Sinner to receive from God that which is in a higher Order of goodness, even that which is *lawfully* good; and in this respect being good, they are so far pleasing to God, as they are dispositive unto Regeneration and Conversion. Hence it is written, Mark 10. 21. That Jesus beholding an unconverted man, loved him; the Man was certainly as yet in an unregenerated, unconverted State, as appears by the 22 verse, and by the following Discourse of our Saviour; yet he was something solicitous about his Salvation, and had some small weak Disposition towards Conversion; which our Saviour observed in him, and was pleased with it, and loved him under that Consideration, as something inclined, and disposed towards Conversion; now our Saviour as Man and as Mediator was never pleased with any thing, but as it was pleasing to God, and never loved any Man further than God loved him.

to the Article which is intended that the former Works or Actions of unregenerate Men, done by the Grace of Christ and Inspiration of his Spirit, are by the Ordination and free Constitution of God, Preparatory and Dispositive unto the Reception of special living Grace in Regeneration and Conversion; But if it intends them at all, it denies that of their own Nature they are meritoriously Dispositive, either unto the Grace of Regeneration or Justification; for the clearing of this, it is to be well considered that before the Reformation there were several numerous Sects of Schoolmen in the Roman Church, whereof one to wit, the *Scots*, held that a Sinner by doing what he can, as far as his natural Strength will go, without any Supernatural Grace from Christ, may Merit the first Supernatural Grace, with a Merit of Congruity; and this same Doctrine was taught at Rome even after the Reformation and Council of Trent, and published by *Nicolas* in a Book intitled, *Consolatorum iuxta the Conscientia*. Printed at Rome in the Year, 1604, as is to be seen in the 5. Chapter of the 1<sup>st</sup> part, pag. 57. where he maintains that, *Facienti quod in se est, suis meritis debet, Dei Gratiam infundibilem, & meritoriam*. That is, *Man who does what he can by the alone Power of Nature, God gives Grace infusible, and meritorious with as necessary as the Sun gives Light to all that open their Eyes to receive it*. But others of the Schoolmen rejected this Opinion of the *Scots*, as a semipelagian Error; yet even they held that God having freely given to an unconverted Sinner the first Supernatural preventing Grace, he may thereafter in Gratitude and Turn himself to God, as to Merit of Congruity the Grace of the first Justification; that is, the Infusion of the Habit of justifying or sanctifying Grace.

Now the 13<sup>th</sup> Article of the Church of England, was levelled against both these Opinions of the Papists, especially and expressly against the (III.) Works done by the alone Power of Nature, cannot make Men meet to receive Grace, or they cannot deserve Grace of Congruity, because they are done before and without any Grace of Christ and Inspiration of his Spirit, and so are not pleasing to God, and what is not pleasing to him cannot possibly Merit the Grace of Regeneration or Justification at his Hand. (1.) Neither the Works done without any Grace of Christ, nor the Works done by the help of Christs preventing common Grace before Regeneration, make Men meet to receive, or of Congruity deserve the Grace of Justification, because they do not Spring out of Faith in Jesus Christ, but are both of them before it, and therefore are not pleasing to God unto Justification and Salvation; yet that nothing hinders, but the Works which are done by the preventing Grace of Christ before Conversion, may by Gods free Ordination be Preparatory and Materially Dispositive unto Conversion and Faith in Christ.

(4.) We willingly grant what the Article saith, That Works done before Regeneration and Conversion, have the Nature of Sin; because they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, that is, they are not so circumstantiated, as God requires good Works to be: Yet it doth not follow, that such of them as are done by the help of preventing Grace, are in the Nature of Sin; as our Author would make People believe; for it is one thing for a Work to have the Nature of Sin, cleaving out it; and it is another thing to be Sin and nothing but Sin; the Works of which we now speak, certainly have the Nature of Sin, cleaving to them, as they proceed from an unregenerate Man, whose Heart is not yet renewed, and who is not endued with a living Faith; and as they are not directed by him to the Glory of God as the best and highest end; and yet it is so far from being true, that they are Sin in the strictest and most proper Sense, that on the contrary, they are Materially and Dispositively good; for they are commanded by God, and as they proceed from the preventing, extrinsec Grace of Christs Spirit, causing a Man to do them in Obedience to Gods Command; and likewise they are Relatively and Dispositively good, as they are ordered by God to be a means of preparing and disposing Man for obtaining Grace of Regeneration.

on and Conversion. Hence Dr. Owen in the Words of our Faithful says, "With the  
they are good in themselves, and Fruits of the kindness of God towards us." And Pag.  
198. He saith, "That in their own Nature they have a tendency unto future Corruption."  
And Pag. 167. He saith, "that the Spirit of Grace invariably leads on us by His  
and Alliances, and where, and where He prepares the soul with His Grace in Duty." Thus  
Dr. Owen, whereby it manifestly appears that he was far from thinking, that all  
a Man can do before he have the Spirit of God dwelling in him, and in Order  
to a Holy change, first in his Heart and then in his Life, is between him and  
and an Acting of Sin.

And as for was Dr. Twiss from any such thought, for this he writes in the Book mentioned before: *There is a legal Repentance; and there is an Evangelical Repentance: And this legal Repentance may bring to Depravation; as Judas his Repentance was: In that this legal Repentance may be a Fruit of the Spirit of Bondage, which prepares for the bearing of the Gospel; and for the receiving of the Spirit of Adoption by the Gift; then in the Preaching of the Gospel, the greater Mercies of God display unto us, and how ready he is to pardon Sinners.*

may bestow our Repentance; and when we see that by Degrees brought to the Spirit of Holiness, (17. 67.) Further than our Repentance hath been effected, before I said, and when we look upon them whom we have viewed, and seen in the place of Faith, as with the Apostles: I know by Faith in God who will give me the same for me, this is of Borneo's price: as might be said, and might be said in Repentance in the light of our Gracious God (whom we have offended) and who is the Father of our spirits hath loved us) more Devoutly and Affectionately than ever before. Yet is it true, as the (17. 67.) Further than our Repentance: I submit your Faith, what think ye? Alas! Repentance, what be you on Saturday, and Sunday in the, upon the Word of Judgment against his House, brought unto him by the Prophet Elijah? Do we not know, what the Lord said, denounce unto Elijah, Sleep thou, but Ahab is blinded before me? because he submitteth himself before me, I will not bring that evil in his days. The utterance of the Ninivites Faith was this, that we read of, who can tell if God will turn and Repent, and turn from his fierce Wrath, that we perish us? To their Repentance was such, that when God saw their works, that they turned from their evil Ways, he repented of the evil which he said: thus he would be unto them, and he did it not. John 3. 1. In the 100. 17. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 777. 778. 779. 780. 781. 782. 783. 784. 785. 786. 787. 788. 789. 790. 791. 792. 793. 794. 795. 796. 797. 798. 799. 800. 801. 802. 803. 804. 805. 806. 807. 808. 809. 810. 811. 812. 813. 814. 815. 816. 817. 818. 819. 820. 821. 822. 823. 824. 825. 826. 827. 828. 829. 830. 831. 832. 833. 834. 835. 836. 837. 838. 839. 840. 841. 842. 843. 844. 845. 846. 84

Thus Dr. Twiss, whereby it is evident that he was far from thinking that all which a man can do before he have the Spirit of God dwelling in him, and that he may get a Holy Heart, and a saving Faith, and so Life, is nothing but vain labour, and an acting of Sin.

to know God, to which they are brought in Men by the Spirit, and according  
 to the Word; and are enabled by God to be means of removing such things as  
 hinder Conversion, and of the helping Man forward in the way unto, and of  
 saving and preparing them for Conversion, as a Gracious Gift which ordinarily  
 God freely gives to those who are so prepared by the Word and Spirit of Christ.  
 In this second sense (though not in the Popish or Semipelagian sense) the fore-  
 said works do indeed denote assistance to receive Grace from God; and the Article  
 of the *Effect of Faith* is not to the contrary; Yea it is plainly against  
 the Popish opinion that all that is an In regenerate man can do by any means,  
 in order to the getting of his heart savingly changed and finally sanctified by  
 the special efficacious *Work of the Regenerating Spirit of Christ* is vain labour  
 and working of Sin; we say that the fore-*said Article of the Confession of Faith*  
 is plainly against that Popish opinion; for it says expressly, *That works of Inre-*  
*generation are nothing which God commands; and are of great use both to worshipers and*  
*others; and none of these both, when they can possibly be infused to themselves, as to*  
*dispose and prepare them for Regeneration and Conversion, and so make them*  
*(if God does, not need)* *use, means, nor receive special saving Grace from God*  
*through Jesus Christ.* And thus according to the *Confession of Faith* and our  
 principles agreeable thereto, we can give encouragement to regenerate men  
 to attend upon God in the diligent use of means for obtaining the free and ef-  
 fectual Grace of the Regenerating Spirit, and so Conversion (thereby) that our  
 Author teaches that all regenerate men, that all they can do before they be Re-  
 generated, and have the Holy Spirit dwelling in them, which is not only by faith in  
 Christ, and therefore is his order; not after British Church, which  
 they do not with a desire that they may be Regenerated; and thus ob-  
 tain a precious Faith in Christ, and thereby the Holy Spirit of Christ.  
 is still vain labour and a working of Sin. Now is not this great encourage-  
 ment for men to give upon God in the use of his appointed means for the  
 obtaining of converting Grace, and a new holy heart, to tell them that all they  
 can do in order to that end is vain labour, and working of Sin? We hope such  
 men will not believe our Author; but if they do, there is nothing can be ex-  
 pected of them; but as has been shewed, all use of means, and diligence  
 in all good works, hearing, and praying, for which should they trouble themselves with  
 such Religious Exercises, since it is a working of Sin, and lost labour too. Yet  
 if our Author should intend to set up some *Quists*, the fore-*said Doctrine* may be  
 of good use to bring in Disciples to him; for he can tell them boldly (as his  
 manner is) that if they will become *Quists*, they will show them an infallible  
 way wherein they shall neither get, nor yet lose their labour; for if they  
 will become *Quists*, they shall neither lose nor labour; but wholly  
 rest from all their labours, and shall not at all lose their labour, be-  
 cause they shall not at all lose labour at all, but wholly rest from action and  
 labour; and whilst they are in a state of perfect rest without any kind of action  
 or labour at all. Then the Spirit of God shall fall upon them, and Regenerate  
 and Convert them.

[3.] *Objection.* Thirdly, the Objects the Testimony of Calvin, who wrote  
 in his *Institution* writes thus against the *Popish*, *They have found us Iniquity*; 3;  
 1. *nam per nos non venit, sed Deus; unde non nos, sed Deus, qui nos facit acceptabiles; cap. 3. 1. 3. 6.*  
*God, before they are brought into Christ, and the Scripture says, when it*  
*saith, they are all in death, who have not believed on John 3. 18. if they be in death,*  
*how should they have any power to do good? it is more of no force, what power is without*  
*Faith in the Redeemer? it is as if an evil man could be a good man. But now what*  
*place have these words? Justification by Faith alone? where be any purgatory and*  
*difficulties? Why they say, what he hath merited for us, the first Grace, this is,*  
*he hath given us power of working, and this must be a purgatory, not to be running*



in interpreting the action offered by this passage of Calvin quoted here more fully than it is in the letter, we see more clearly what it is that Calvin is there disputing against, *scilicet*, the Popish Doctrine of man's meriting his justification and Acceptance with God, as righteous unto eternal life, by moral good works done by him before he be justified; and that is plain their sense before he be initially sanctified in Regeneration and Conversion; for they perpetually confound these two, justification; and initial sanctification; on the infusion of habitual Grace, as signifying the same thing. This is that which Calvin there denies and disproves. Now this being premised, to give light unto the whole matter. We answer, That this is nothing to our Authors' purpose; who brings this passage to prove that Calvin denied all preparations and dispositions before Regeneration and Conversion, and consequently before justification; whereas Calvin here denies no such thing; the only thing that he here denies against the Popists, is that a man by moral good works done before justification, can merit justification; which we deny, as much as he doth; and that for the same reason too, because there neither are nor can be any moral works before Regeneration and Conversion, that are so good as to merit justification, and render a man acceptable unto God. But elsewhere he is so far from denying that he expressly affirms and maintains that there are some preparations and dispositions in man previous to his justification, as we have plainly shewed before. And particularly in his answer to *Pighius*, he only denies that a man by his meer natural power without any supernatural Grace, can prepare and dispose himself for special saving Grace, but at the same time he confesses and proves that by the gracious influences of Gods Spirit upon a man, he may be and is prepared and disposed for justification; for though the man be spiritually dead, yet he hath a natural life and the use of his reason, and the living and life-giving Spirit of God, can use his naturally living, and rational Faculties to produce such actions as by the Ordination of God shall prepare and dispose him to receive the first principle of Spiritual Life from the Lord of Life, and upon the exercise of that first principle of Spiritual Life in acts of Faith and Evangelical Repentance, God for Christs sake alone, pardons his sins, and gives him a right to eternal life. And as we have seen how near this is all that we, with *Amer*, *Twiss*, and *Owen*, after the Synod of Dort hold and maintain concerning dispositions previous to Regeneration and justification, and Calvin in this passage doth not contradict this opinion, but in his other Books maintains it himself. If our Author should yet object, that at least one of the places of Scripture which Calvin alleges against the Popists, *scilicet*, *Rom. 9. 23. Whosoever in works of Faith, is first*, will be of force against us, and against the previous dispositions which we with the Synod of Dort maintain. We answer, That he will find himself very much mistaken, for it is of no force at all against us and our opinions. And to speak our minds freely, as it becomes all ingenious men to do, we do not see that in it self, it was of any force against that opinion of the Popists which Calvin was there confuting. Yet to excite Calvin arguing from it against them, it may be said, that he did not speak his own sense therein, but the sense of *Augustin*, who mistook the true sense of that place of Scripture, as if the word (*Faith*) there, did signifie a justifying Faith; and so urged it frequently against the *Pelagians*. Now the Popish Schoolmen pretended to have a great Veneration for the Authority and Judgment of *Augustin*; therefore Calvin knowing this, might argue *ad hominem* against them, from that place of Scripture taken in *Augustin*'s sense, and the argument might be of some use to stop their mouths. But otherwise the Argument in it self was of no force at all, because it is grounded upon a false Interpretation of the word (*Faith*) in that place. And this Calvin knew well enough, therefore not only in his Commentary on the Epistle to the *Romans*, but several times in his *Institutes*, when he speaks his own sense of *Rom. 9. 23. Whosoever in works of Faith, is first*

sin; he says, that by the Word (*Faith*) there is not meant a justifying Faith, but a firm persuasion of Mind, in opposition to doubting that a thing is lawful, and that it may be done without sin; so that according to *Calvin*, the true and genuine sence of the place is, That whatsoever a man doth without *Faith*, that is, without a firm persuasion of mind that he may lawfully do it, whatsoever a man doth with a doubting Conscience, it is sin to him who, so doth it, though the thing be never so lawful in it self. Thus *Calvin* expounds it in the Third Book of his Institutions, Chap. 5. § 10. *Quum nihil operis debeant aggredi fideles, nisi ceria Conscientia, ut Paulus precipit (Rom. 14. 23.) in oratione possimum requiritur hac certitudo. Since Believers should undertake no work, but with a sure Conscience, as Paul Commands in Rom. 14. 23. This assurance is chiefly required in Prayer; to wit, that we pray to no person, but with a sure and well Grounded Perswasion in our Conscience, that we may Lawfully pray to him. Again in the Fourth Book, Chap. 15. § 22. In rebus etiam minutissimis, ut in cibo & potu, quicquid dubia conscientia aggredimur, Paulus aperte clamat esse peccatum. § 17. Rom. 14. 23. Even in the most minute little things, as in meat and drink, whatsoever we do with a doubting Conscience, Paul doth plainly declare it to be sin. Rom. 14. 23. For whatsoever is not of Faith is sin. In these passages *Calvin* speaks both his own sence, and the true sence of the Apostle; and therefore in the other passage quoted by our Author, he must either speak the sence of *Augustin*, and from it argue ad hominem, against the Papists, or else he plays the Sophister, and wrests the Scripture against his own knowledge and Conscience, which we are unwilling to believe of so great and good a man: But we cannot be so confident of the sincerity of our Author as we are of *Calvin*, and therefore we commend to his serious Consideration, a passage of the Reverend and Learned *Pitcarne* in his Evangelical Harmony of the Apostles *Paul* and *James* in the Doctrine of Justification, Art. 1. Pag. 10. *Tantum addo quod, &c. I only add (says he) that in the Scriptures, the word (Faith) is also used for the Conscience or persuasion of the will of God approving our Faith, or that which we are to do. [Whatsoever is not of faith, is sin.] This is, It is sin, whatsoever it be that is done with a Conscience that is doubting and uncertain of the will of God. I was not a little grieved when I read Suarez accusing our Divines, that they acted the part of Sophisters, when to prove Justification by Faith alone, they alledge without making a right choice, or putting a difference between one and another, any places of Scripture where faith is mentioned, although in them there is not the least hint to be found of Faith related to Christ, and the promises of the Gospel, or that hath respect unto absolution from the guilt of sin. This should teach us all to take great care how we quote and apply Scripture to prove our opinions, least by misapplying Texts, we wrest the Scripture, grieve Gods Spirit, and harden our Adversaries in their Erroneous opinions.**

4th. Obj. Fourthly, He Objects against us, *The Seventh Canon of the Sixth Session of the Council of Trent, which Anathematizeth all those who say that all works done before Justification, howsoever they be done are truly sins. We answer, that this objection is impertinent, and makes against himself as well as against us. For (1.) He says that Faith is in order of nature before Justification, as we have proved from several passages in his Letter.* Let. p. 16. 32.

(2.) He saith, Pag. 11. *That Faith is a work, that it is a great work, that it is a work of God, yea a work of God which we do, and cannot do too soon. Now we hope he will not say that this great work of God, which through Grace we do before Justification, and cannot do too soon, is an evil work, and is truly sin: And if it be not an evil work, and truly sin, then it must be a good work, and truly Gracious: And thus we have himself holding with the Council of Trent, as well as we do, that before Justification there is a good work which is not truly sin, but truly good and Gracious. If he say, that Faith doth not justify as a work, that is nothing to the purpose, for the Question now is not, whether*

whether Faith justify as a work, or as an instrument, but whether Faith really be a work; an internal work of the Soul, which it may well be, and yet not justify as a work: And he himself hath expressly confessed that it is a work, and a great work too, and likewise that it is a great work which not only God doth, but which we do through the Grace of God enabling us. But after all, if he be so resolved that he will have nothing common with the Council of Trent, but differ from them in all things true or false, right or wrong; and therefore because they hold that justifying Faith is a good work before justification, that is not truly sin, he will hold the contrary that tho justifying Faith be before justification, yet it is not a good work, but an evil work, and is truly sin: we can say nothing to it, he hath his free choice, for any thing that we can do to the contrary; yet we should advise him to be wiser, and not to reject any Truth of the Gospel, because an adversary holds and believes it. And that it is a Gospel-truth, that justifying saving Faith is a good work, tho it be in order before justification, we doubt not but his own Conscience knows it and is convinced of it. Sure we are that our Conscience is fully persuaded of it. And tho' we believe in our hearts and confess with our mouths, that justifying Faith in the best of us is too too little and weak, and that the gradual defect of it is truly sin, and deserves the hatred of God; yet are we infallibly sure that the Grace and gracious Act it self of justifying saving Faith, so far as we have any of it, is truly good and cannot be truly evil and sin. This we are sure is a truth, and we believe it, and are resolved through Grace so to do, and never to like it the worse because the Papists believe it, and curse all those who disbelieve it. We join with them in believing the truth so far as they do believe it; but we utterly abhor their cursing of Dissenters. If our Author think fit to Dissent from us in this matter, we shall be so far from cursing him, that we shall pray God to bless him with a better understanding of this and all other things, wherein he may be mistaken. As for the other passage which our Author quotes out of the 11th. Canon, and calls the *bestowing of the Beast*. We might pass it over, for it doth not at all concern us, nor the Controversie that is between the Author of the Letter and us. Yet this we will say that he seems not to understand the Language of that Beast of Trent, for they confess with us, That the Grace whereby we are justified, is the favour of God; as plainly appears from what they say before the *Canons*, in the 7th. Chapter, but they curse all those who say that the Grace whereby we are justified is *only the favour of God*: For they hold that we are justified by a two-fold Grace, the one *External without us*, and it is the mercy and favour of God, which is that that principally moves him to justify us; the other *Internal within us*, the effect of the first, and it is the habit of Grace or Charity infused into us by the holy Spirit to make us *formally just by something Inherent in our selves*. Now we do not say (any more than they do) that we are justified by the favour of God only, and exclusively of all other things; for we maintain that we are justified by the Grace and Favour of God, and also by the Righteousness of Christ imputed to us, according to *Rom. 3. 24*. And this is the ground of the Quarrel, this is it for which they Curse our Author and us both, because we both believe that we are justified by Christs Righteousness imputed to us, and not by Gods Grace infused into us, and inherent in us. And yet we believe this too, *to wit*, that Gods Grace is infused into us and inherent in us; only we do not call this Justification, but give it another name, and call it Sanctification. Those *Trent Fathers* therefore had no reason to be so angry with us, and in their Beastly wrath to fall a cursing of us.

But after all this anger on both sides, there may be some hope that the Children of those Fathers and our Author may be reconciled in time, if the old *Axiom* be true, that (*Quia sunt eadem in terminis, sunt eadem inter se*); They who agree

in a third, agree between themselves or one with another. But so it is that they agree in a third, to wit, in *Bradwardin*. For certain, Papists agree with *Bradwardin* in the matter of Justification; and they will have good hope that our Author will do so, too, when they consider that in the 13th. page of his Letter, he saith, *That God gave Bradwardin for a Blessing to England*. For since he believes that *Bradwardin* was a Blessing to England, the Papists cannot but hope that he will be of *Bradwardin*'s mind in the important point of Justification, and if the World would know of what mind *Bradwardin* was in that matter, they may see it in his Book, pag. 406 *Confiteor Deum meum sicut aeternaliter gratiis me dilexisti, et aeternaliter gratiam justificatricem tempore placito coram eo, mihi gratis conferre disposuisti, sic tempore placito venientis, gratis inludere gratiam Justificationem mihi injusto, justificare me gratis, lavare iniquitates meas gratis, suscitare et sanare me gratis, debitum poenae aeternae dimittere mihi gratis, atque in poenam temporalem vertere ipsam gratis, &c.* I confess that my God, (as from eternity he freely loved me, and likewise from eternity purposed freely to give me justifying Grace in such time as seemed good in his sight, so when the time appointed comes) doth freely infuse justifying Grace into me an unjust man, that he doth justify me freely, wash away my unrighteousness freely, raise up and heal me freely, that he doth freely forgive me the debt of eternal punishment, and freely change it into temporal punishment, &c. And Pag. 416. *Nec etiam peccator, peccato dimisso, statim habet reformationem plenariam statumque sui, sicut evidenter sequitur ex predictis: adhuc enim remanet debitum poenae, et satisfactionis debita pro peccato.* Nor when sin is forgiven, hath the Sinner immediately a full reformation or change of the state of his Soul, as it evidently follows from what hath been said before, for he yet remains a debtor of punishment, or bound to suffer punishment, and to make the satisfaction which he owes for his sin. Thus *Bradwardin*, he speaks the true Language of the Beast, and makes Justification to be by inherent Righteousness, and the pardon of the eternal punishment of sin, with a reservation of the temporal punishment to be yet suffered, and of satisfaction to be made by ourselves either in this life, or in Purgatory after this life. In all which there is a perfect agreement between him and the Council of *Trent*. And let no man think that he must needs differ from the Council of *Trent*, because he speaks so much of Gods freely justifying the unrighteous; for it is the first Justification that he speaks of, and the Council of *Trent* speaks the self-same Language, witness their own formal express words in the Eight Chapter of the Sixth Session, *Perpetuus Ecclesia Catholica concilii sententia tenet, ut, &c.* That perpetual consent of the Catholick Church *Trident* Ses. hath always held, that we are therefore said to be justified freely, 6. Cap. 8. because none of those things which go before Justification, whether Faith or Works, do merit the Grace of Justification; for if it be of Grace, then it is not of Works, otherwise as the same Apostle saith, *Grace is no more Grace, Rom. 11. 6.* Thus the Council of *Trent*. Whereby it is evident that they and *Bradwardin* are agreed as to the freeness of Justification, and it is as evident from the Canons that they are agreed about the formal nature of Justification, wherein it consists. And as the Papists that keep close to the Council of *Trent*, are agreed with *Bradwardin* in the fundamental point of Justification against the *Pelagians*; so they are not without ground of hope that our Author will agree also (if he do not already agree) with the profound *Bradwardin*, in that fundamental point of Justification against the *Pelagians*, because he hath publicly confessed it in the 13th. Page of his Letter, *that God gave Bradwardin to be a Blessing unto England*; surely then (will they say among themselves) this Minister will not differ from *Bradwardin* in so important a point of Religion, for fear he should prove a Curse unto England. It is not impossible, nor it may be improbable, but Papists who consider of the matter, may thus reason themselves into the hopes of a Profelyte to their Religion. Therefore we will endeavour to frustrate their hopes, and to prevent our Brothers being drawn over to them, by

means of his admired *Bradwardin*, and this we shall do by giving him a further account of the Principles and Practices of that profound Doctor. Thus then he writes in 61 page of his Book, called, *The Cause of God. Nos Imagines Christi, Dei, Trinitatis, Angelorum & Sanctorum hominum Adoramus.* 'We worship the Images of Christ, of God, of the Trinity, of Angels, and Holy Men. Again in the same page, *Nos Deum propter se, & Sanctos, Angelos ejus, & Homines, & ipsorum Imagines adoramus finaliter propter Deum.* 'We worship God for his own sake, and we worship his holy Angels and Men finally for Gods sake. This *Bradwardin* confesseth to have been the Principle and Practice of himself and his Church: And in the same page he very kindly makes an Apology for the Heathen, and excuses them from the guilt of damnable Idolatry upon the same principle, 'For (says he) it is probable they had some knowledge of the true God, and him they worshipped for his own sake, (*sub nomine tamen & Idolo Dei Fovis*) yet under the name and Idol or Image of the God *Jupiter. Et nihilominus prater ipsum, &c.* And yet besides him, they worshipped some other Idols, dedicated unto Holy Angels, unto Men and Demons, and in them, and by them they finally worshipped God. That is the *Pagans* worshipped God for himself, but they worshipped Idols and Devils for Gods sake, just as the *Papists* worship Saints and Angels; and that excused them from the guilt of damnable Idolatry, as it doth the Church of *Rome*; and they therein found acceptance with God: For they knew no better, and did as well as they could, Therefore (*Deus ipsa pietate & discretione respiciens, ignorantia & simplicitati eorum pepercit, sinceram vero dilectionem, sanctam intentionem, & benevolam voluntatem acceptavit: Hoc autem consonum videtur rationi, non enim videtur quid iustissimum atque piissimum plus requiratur ab homine quam acceperit, & quam sit in hominis potestate, imò quod illud acceperit si intentione debita offeratur.*) 'God considering these things mercifully and discreetly spared their ignorance and simplicity, but he accepted the sincere love, the holy intention, and kind will of those worshippers of Demons. And this seems agreeable to reason that it should be so, for it is not likely that the most just and merciful God doth require more of a man than he hath received, and more than is in a mans power; yea it is rather probable that God accepts of what a man is able do, if it be offered with a due Intention. Thus the profound Doctor, and by this let all *Calvinists* judge, and let the Conscience of our Author judge, how well that Doctor hath confuted the *Pelagians*, and how greatly *England* is blessed with such a Confuter.

One touch more, and we have done with him. In the 16th Chapter of his first Book of the Cause of God against *Pelagius*, he maintains with all his might, that nothing is evil of its self, but by Accident, *no not the wickedest thing that a Man doth or can do*; and therefore that the most horrid wickedness a Man can commit, in other circumstances may cease to be Evil, and be no Sin to him that commits it: To prove this, he makes several Suppositions. As, (1.) in Pag. 256. He puts this Case (which he says is possible) That a simple Man without any foregoing fault of his, is so deluded by the Devil. (whom he calls Behemoth, the most cunning of all Sophisters) that he is made to believe that unless he blaspheme or hate God, he shall necessarily and unavoidably commit more Sin, than that blasphemy or hatred of Gods amounts unto.

Now says our profound Doctor in this Case, (*Iste simplex secundum judicium rectissima rationis, teneatur blasphemare Deum, vel odire, ne alias incidat in majus peccatum, quantum secundum communem animi conceptionem, de duobus malis, minus malum est eligendum, cujus causa est, quia in bonis est contrarium, scilicet quod majus est magis eligendum.*) That simple Man according to the Judgment of the most right Reason, is bound to blaspheme God, or to hate him, lest otherwise, (as Satan tells him) he fall into a greater Sin, for according to the common Notion of Mans Mind, of two Evils the least is to be chosen, the Reason whereof is this, that on the contrary, of things that are good, the greatest is to be chosen.

From these Premises he concludes, that to blaspheme or hate God, is not of its self necessarily and unalterably evil and sinful; because there may happen a Case, wherein



wherein a simple Man, deluded by the Devil, is bound to blaspheme or hate God, and that according to the Judgment of Reason, of Right Reason, yea of the most Right Reason, and that is, of the best Reason in the World. (1.) In the same Page he puts another like Case, which he saith, *It is possible also without any foregoing fault of the Person concerned. Suppose a simple Man swears to be entirely obedient to his Prelate or Superior in all things; then that Prelate, or the Devil transformed into him, commands the simple Man to hate or blaspheme God. The Poor Man is certainly caught in a snare, but how shall he get out? why according to Bradwardin, It is possible for him to get out safe by blaspheming or hating God in Obedience to his Superiour, and out of Conscience of his Oath; for that is the least Evil of the two, and so comparatively is no Evil as all; because to blaspheme or hate God is but one Sin, and that against God only, (multumque excusatum per præceptum Prælati) and it is much excused by the command of his Superiour; whereas he believes, that in this Case not to obey, is a greater Sin, because. (1.) It is against his Superiour. (2.) It is also against God, whose Vicegerent his Superiour is. (3.) It is a Violation and breach of his Oath and Vow.*

This is another of his Demonstrations, that blasphemy and hatred of God, is not of it self and unalterably Evil, because here is a possible Case wherein it ceases to be Evil, and an Honest Man outwitted by a Knave may do it without Sin. In the next Page, he hath other Arguments of the like Nature to prove the same Position; but we are unwilling to have any thing more to do with him, for he next supposes Satan to be transformed into Christ himself, and in that likeness to act his part so dexterously and effectually as to discharge a Man from his Duty to God, and oblige him in Conscience to commit the foresaid Wickedness for a time, for fear of being necessitated to do it for ever, and to all Eternity. Now upon the whole, we refer it to all Men of common sense, who have any true fear of God, and love to Christ and pure Christianity, to judge whether this be blest or cursed Doctrine, and whether England be beholding to that Man who commends such Books to young Ministers?

But though we think the Nation, and young Ministers in it are little beholding to him on that account; yet we hope better things of him than that he will ever become a Proflyte to the Popish Religion, or that for the sake of Bradwardin, he will ever embrace the foresaid Doctrines, which many Papists themselves abhor.

It may be he will say, that this Bradwardin was an English Man, that lived long since, and he did not ken him well; but if he had ken'd him or his Book either, he would never have so commended him. And if he be ingenuous to say so, we readily admit the excuse, for we believe it to be very true, and find that in more things than that one, he writes of what he doth not understand, and that too with an Air of Confidence that deserves a rebuke. And withall, we advise him for the future to forbear talking of old Authors, and commending their Books to Ministers, for he seems not to be much acquainted with that kind of Learning.

As he writes in his Letter, *Pag. 2.* That a great many Young Students have contented themselves with studying English Authors, so we think it had not been ill for him, if he had contented himself with studying such Scots Authors, and English too, as never trod in the By-paths of Bradwardin, Salimarsby or Crisp. We have mentioned some of that sort already, to whom we will now adde a few more; and first we commend to our Authors. Consideration, a Passage or two of a Reverend, Learned and Modest Scots Divine, whom he should ken better than the old Englishman Bradwardin. It is Mr. Dickson once Professour of Divinity in the Colledge of Edinburgh, who in his *Therapeutica Sacra*, writes thus, *Together*

- \* with these external Means (mentioned before) serving for drawing
- \* on the Covenant, and going on in it, the common Operations of God
- \* do concur; common to all the called both Elect and Reprobate, and
- \* Gifts common to both are bestowed, such as Illumination, Moral
- \* Perswasion, Historical, Dogmatical and Temporary Faith, Moral
- \* Change of Affections, and some sort of external Amendment of their

Dickson

*Therapeutica*

*Sacra*. Book

1. Chap. 6.

pag. 92.

\* out-

outward Conversation, saving Grace being the special Gift of God to his own, &c. And pag. 95. 'The Lord makes use of this outward and common Covenanting with all Receivers of the offer, as a mean to draw the Confederate in the Letter, to be Confederate in the Spirit; for the Faith which he requires as the Condition of the Covenant, he worketh in the Elect, if not before, or with the external Covenanting, yet undoubted after, in a time acceptable; and that by the ordinary means, the use whereof is granted to all Confederate externally; and so as common Illumination is a mean to that Special, Spiritual and saving Illumination; and Dogmatical and Historical Faith, is a mean unto Saving Faith, and external Calling is a mean to Effectual Calling, so external Covenanting in the Letter, is a mean most fit and accommodate to make a Man a Covenanter in the Spirit.

Here are Preparations and Dispositions before either Regeneration or Justification plainly asserted by *Dickson*; then pag. 99. he enters upon a large Discourse, concerning the Condition of the Covenant; and he says, 'That in receiving of grown Persons into Covenant, There are three Conditions to be observed and distinguished one from another. (1.) The Condition of the Person desiring to be in Covenant with God for Reconciliation and Grace through Christ: (2.) The Condition upon which he is entered into Covenant. (3.) The Condition required of him for evidencing of his sincere Covenanting. And Pag. 100. He says all these three are expressed by Christ in *Matth. 11. 28, 29.*

First, *They that labour and are heavy laden*, are they whom Christ calleth unto a Covenant, and fellowship of his Grace; this that he calls the Condition of the Person, is the same thing with that which we call the Disposition or Qualification of the Person.

Secondly, He propounds the Condition of the Covenant, to wit, that they believe in Christ, or come unto him, that in him they may find full relief from Sin and Misery, and in him full Righteousness and Felicity.

Thirdly, He requires of them who do embrace him by Faith, and so have accepted the Condition of the Covenant, that they give evidence of their Faith in him; by taking his Yoke upon them. *Take my Yoke upon you*, saith he. Mr. *Dickson* calls this, 'The third Condition; and says a little before, that it is the Covenanters up-giving of himself to Christs Government and Obedience of his Commands.

This brings to our remembrance, a Passage in the Catechism, published by the Calvinists of Marpurg in the Year 1606. *Fidem sufficere ad apprehendendam salutem, non autem ad eam conservandam: sed amplius requiri vitæ emendationem.* 'That Faith is sufficient for the first apprehending or receiving of Salvation; but not for the conserving or continuing of it; but there is moreover required Amendment of Life.

It reminds us also, of what we read in the fourth Tome of Monsieur *Claudes* Posthumous Work, in the very entrance of his Treatise of Justification, Pag. 75. That there are Dispositions previous unto Justification; and that there are Conditions, which God necessarily supposes in Man, and which ought to be found actually in him. And then that there are Conditions, which God imposes upon a Man, when he justifies him, to the end that he may observe them for the time to come.

In like manner he distinguishes, in his Historical Defence of the Reformation, Part 2. Chap. 6. pag. 218. of the English Translation, 'Between the Condition supposed to Justification, which is Faith and Repentance; and the Condition imposed upon us by the Lord, when he justifies us, which is, that for the time to come, we live Holily according to the Laws which he has given us.

But this on the by, from *Dickson* we pass to the Learned *Charnock*, he saith, 'That besides the Passive Capacity, that is, the Rational Faculties, there are more immediate Preparations. The Soul must be beaten down by Convictions, before it be raised up by Regeneration; there must be some apprehensions of the Necessity of it. Yet sometimes the Work of Regeneration follows so close upon the heels of these Preparations, that both must be acknowledged to be the work of one and the same hand. The Preparation of the Subject is necessary; but this Preparation may be at the same time, with the conveyance of the Divine Nature. And afterwards for several Pages, he saith no more, than what we have said, 'That there is not any absolute causal Connection between such Preparations, and Regeneration, nor any Connection that is meritorious. — Yet all along he asserts Preparations.

From *Charnock* we pass to *Flavel*, who spends two whole Sermons to prove, 'That there is no coming ordinarily to Christ without the Application of the Law to our Consciences; in a way of effectual Conviction. This our Author will grant, as we perceive by his Letter. But Mr. *Flavel* spends two Sermons more to prove, 'That this cannot be without the teachings of God in the way of Spiritual Illumination. From *Flavel* we pass to *Flinn*, who shews at large 'That man naturally is not a subject fit or disposed to receive Christ immediately when offered to him, but before he will receive him, there must be some work of the Spirit upon him to prepare him, make him willing and glad to receive him. — And if this were not so, but as our Author would have it, it would follow unavoidably that Mr. *Hooker* and Mr. *Shepherd* in their Books about the Souls Preparation for Christ, and the several steps of it, viz. Conviction, Compunction, Humiliation, &c. were very great impertinencies, and which is worse, did a great deal of hurt to the Souls of men.

For our parts, since we are said to be *Middle-way-men*, we think that to answer that Character that is given of us, we ought to avoid all extremes as well in this, as in other matters; and therefore we say, that no more of the fore-said Preparatory Dispositions, is simply and absolutely necessary than what makes the Soul, (1.) See its absolute need of Christ, and its being utterly lost and undone without him. (2.) What makes it see and believe that there is abundant help and relief for lost Sinners in Christ, that he is an Allsufficient Saviour, and the only Allsufficient Saviour, able and willing to save to the uttermost all that come unto him, and unto God by him, in the way prescribed in the Gospel. (3.) What makes them thereupon desirous to have him, and in some sort willing to receive him in all his Offices as he is offered, desirous to have him, and willing to receive him, and his Benefits with him upon his own Terms, the Terms held forth in the Gospel. Of them who by the preventing Grace of the Holy Spirit are thus disposed, there is no more required to be done by them in a way of Preparation for Christ, but they may and ought immediately to receive him into their Hearts by Faith, and Confidently trust him with their Souls and Bodies, with their whole Person, to be saved by him in the way agreed upon between God and Him; and may be firmly and fully persuaded that if they do so through Grace, they cannot possibly miscarry under the hand of such a Saviour and Physician of Souls.

Thus we Preach, and we know none can have just cause to say, that this is a new Gospel, and we hope none will any more say so. We are sure this used not to be accounted a new Gospel heretofore in England, nor is it so accounted at Geneva; \* for Turrettin lately taught there, 'That in the Spiritual Generation, no less than in the natural, the Soul of Man attains unto the Spiritual Birth, by many precedent Operations; and God who will effect that Work in man,

*Turret. Inst. Theolog. Elenct. part 2. Lec 15. quest. 5. p. 192.*

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not by violent raptures, and Enthusiastical Motions, but in a way agreeable to our Nature ; and who doth not in one Moment, but successively and by degrees carry it on ; uses various Dispositions whereby man may be prepared by little and little, to receive saving Grace, at least he does so, in the ordinary way of Calling : So that there are various Acts previous to Conversion, and as it were degrees or steps towards the thing it self, before Man be brought unto the State of Regeneration.

And they are either External, which may be done by a Man, or are in his Power, such as to go unto the Church, to hear the Word, and the like ; or they are Internal, which are excited by Grace, even in the Hearts of the unconverted, such as the Reception and Apprehension of the Word Preached, Knowledge of the Divine Will, some Sense of Sin, Fear of Punishment, and some kind of Desire of Deliverance.

Thus *Turretin* in a Book Printed at *Geneva*, in the Year 1688. By all which Testimonies we have made it plainly appear, That our Opinion concerning the Preparations and Dispositions which ordinarily go before Regeneration and saving Conversion, is neither new nor singular, but that what we Believe and Preach, as to this matter, we have learned and received from the most eminent Pastors of the Reformed Churches, whereof many have lived and died in the true Faith before many of us were born. And this may suffice as enough, and indeed too much, for the Confutation of our Authors third Error against the Purity of our Christian Faith.

## CHAP. III

### *Of his Ridiculous Way of Converting an Unbeliever.*

AND first we acknowledge to our Authors Praise, that he made a good beginning, and from the 17th line of the 15th page to the beginning of the 16th. he Discourses well enough, and shews how indispensibly necessary it is that a Sinner believe on Christ, and what warrant he hath from the Command, as also what encouragement from the Conditional Promise of God in the Gospel, to believe on Christ for Justification and Salvation.

But we cannot say, that as he made a good beginning, so he continues till he have made a good end ; for he gives several miserable Answers to the Questions, which he makes the Unbeliever to put unto the Minister, who is perswading him to believe in Christ.

First, He makes the Unbeliever to ask the Minister, *What it is to believe on Jesus Christ ?* Whereunto he Answers, *That he finds no such Question in the Word of God, but that all, both Believers and Unbelievers, the Disciples, and the Enemies of Christ, did some way understand the Notion of it :* And this he endeavours to prove, because it was commonly reported by Christ and his Apostles, *That Faith in Christ, is a believing that the Man Jesus Christ of Nazareth is the Son of God, the Messiah, and Saviour of the World, so as to receive and look for Salvation in his Name ;* and this common report was known by all that heard it.

This is no satisfactory Answer, for the Unbeliever may easily reply (1st.) That though in the Scriptures, there be no such Question in so many express formal Words, yet there is sufficient ground in and from the Scripture for a Man to ask such a Question, because the Scripture speaks of several sorts of Faith, of an Historical, Temporary, and miraculous Faith ; and of a saving justifying Faith : Of a Faith, that is common to unconverted Wicked Men and Devils, and of a Faith that is proper and peculiar to Gods Elect.

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These Faiths are of different natures, and therefore one of them must have something that another hath not, and each of them must have that whereby they are distinguished in themselves and distinguished from one another. And this being so, that the man be not deceived to his ruin, he hath great reason to put the fore-said Question, and should be commended for asking (if he do it seriously), *What is it to believe on Christ?* To believe in him so as he ought to do, so as may be to Gods Glory, and his own Spiritual and Eternal Good? (2.) He may reply, that if there were no ground for such a Question, why did the *Westminster Assembly* put that same Question in the *Shorter Catechism*, which they composed for the use of Children? Had they no warrant from Scripture for putting such a Question? Or doth the Scripture only warrant Ministers, to put Questions to the People; but not warrant the people to put Questions to the Ministers?

Again he may say, that if there were no ground for putting such a question, why did the same Assembly in their *Confession of Faith* Cap. 14. give such a large Description of Faith? was it not that they and all Art. 1, 2. who own their Confession, might be readily furnished with an Answer to such a question, which they knew was expedient to be asked, (since there are several sorts of Faith in Christ, and so much Hypocritical counterfeit Faith in the World and in the Church), and necessary to be wisely and judiciously answered, that people may understand what kind of Faith it is that they are chiefly to seek after and get; and if they have it, that they may know it to their comfort; and may bleis God for it, and give him the glory of it.

(3dly.) The Unbeliever may reply 'That it doth not follow that because Christ and his Apostles commonly reported that Faith is a believing that Jesus is the Son of God, the Messias and Saviour of the World, so as to receive and look for Salvation in his Name: Therefore the thing Reported was known by all that heard the report, and they did all some way understand the notion of it. For we read in *Luke 18. v. 31, 32, 33.* That Christ told his own Apostles as plainly as any thing can be expressed in words, that he would go up to *Jerusalem*, and that there he should be most cruelly and shamefully put to death, and rise again the third day: And yet in the very next verse 34. It is said, *They understood none of these things: And this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.* If Christs own Apostles remained ignorant of those great Truths concerning himself, which he had newly told them with as great plainness as human Speech is capable of, we may well suppose that Christs Enemies (at least many of them) understood nothing at all of the things that were reported concerning Jesus his being the Christ and Saviour of the World, and concerning believing on him as such.

4. He may reply, That suppose it were true (which can never be proved) that all Christs Enemies knew the common report concerning Faith in him, so as some way to understand the notion of Faith. Yet that is wholly impertinent: for there is a wrong way of understanding a thing, as well as a right way, so that they might some way understand it, and yet that some way might be the wrong way. Now what is that to the purpose, when one asks you this Question, *What is it to believe on Jesus Christ?* To tell him that all Men do some way understand what it is: for some, *to wit*, Christs Friends understand it the right way, and others, *to wit*, his Enemies understand it the wrong way?

If our Author should say that he meant not so, that all men did understand it some way, that is, *either the right or the wrong way*; he would make himself yet more ridiculous: For the Unbeliever would in all probability desire him to name and shew any one way of understanding a thing which is *neither the right way nor the wrong way* of understanding it. And all men of sense would laugh at him, if he should in earnest go about to convince an Unbeliever, that there is



a way of understanding what Faith is, which is neither the right way, nor the wrong way. If lastly our Author should tell the Unbeliever, That in saying, *all men did some way understand what Faith in Christ is*; his meaning is that all men understood it the right way: The Unbeliever would reply upon him, that if that was his meaning, then his meaning must needs be false, because he himself in the 10th. Page of his Letter affirmeth that 'All the ignorant people amongst Christians, and amongst Christians too of the Reformed Churches in England, have no knowledge of Faith in Christ, except by Faith you understand a dream of being saved by Jesus Christ, though they know nothing of him, or of his way of saving Men, nor of the way of being saved by him. Now if all the Ignorant People amongst us know nothing of Faith in Christ, in the right way, unless the *dreaming way* be the right way, how can our Author prove that all the Unbelievers amongst the *Jews*, and *Heathens* (amongst whom Christ and his Apostles preached) whereof many were grossly ignorant, did understand aright what Faith in Christ is? Do our ignorant people know nothing of Christ, nor of his way of saving men? and did not the ignorant *Jews* and *Heathens* know as little? Especially if it be considered that the notion which the Unbelieving *Jews* in general had of the Messias, was that he should be a great and glorious Temporal Prince and Earthly King, who by the material Sword should Conquer and Destroy the *Romans*, and all their other visible Enemies on Earth; and should save their Nation with a Temporal Salvation: But as for Spiritual and Eternal Salvation in another World, many of them, *so wit*, the whole Sect of the *Sadducees*, looked upon it as a Dream of Fanciful men; but for their parts they expected no such thing either from the Messias or from God himself, *Acts* 23. 8.

No man in his right senses who considers these things, can deliberately and seriously think that all the Unbelieving *Jews* who heard the common report concerning *Jesus of Nazareth*, had any righter and better understanding concerning Faith in him, and Salvation by him, than the generality of ignorant People amongst us have. Christ and his Apostles have put this matter past all doubt and controversy with all that do themselves truly believe in Christ. For thus Christ prayed for many of them; *Luke* 23. 34. *Father forgive them for they know not what they do.* Peter also confesseth to themselves that it was through ignorance that they Crucified Christ; *Acts* 3. 17. And Paul writing to the *Corinthians* (1 *Cor.* 2. 7, 8. faith *That had they known the hidden Wisdom of God in a mystery, they would not have Crucified the Lord of Glory.* Whence it is evident that either they had no notion of Faith in Christ, and of Salvation by him, or if they had any at all, it was a wrong and false notion. And to tell a Man who asks us, what it is to believe in Jesus Christ, That even the Enemies of Christ some way understood what it is, because they had some wrong and false notion of it, is both impertinent and ridiculous; and is such an answer as is more apt to make an Unbeliever laugh at Christs Ministers, and harden and confirm him in his Unbelief, than to move him unto seriousness, and to persuade him to believe. So much for the Unbelievers first pertinent Question, and our Authors impertinent Answer to it. We pass on to the other questions and answers, as he hath set them down in the 16 and 17th. pages of his Letter.

Quest. (2.) Unbeliever. *What is a Man to believe, to wit, at first?*

Ministers Answer. 'He is not called to believe that he is in Chaiſt, and that his sins are pardoned, and he a justified man, but he is to believe Gods Record concerning Christ; 1 *John* 5. 10, 11, 12. And this Record is, that God giveth, that is, *offereth us eternal life in his Son Jesus Christ, and that all who with the heart, believe this Report, and rest their Souls on these glad tidings, shall be saved* *Rom.* 10. 9, 10, 11. And thus he is to believe that he may be justified; *Gal.* 2. 16.

This Answer is in it self true and good, but in and from the mouth of our Author

Author it hath no force at all to satisfy the Conscience of an Unbeliever, who seriously seeks Information and Satisfaction as to what he is *first* to believe; because if he attentively read and consider our Authors Letter, he will see cause to doubt whether in this matter he really believes himself: Because in his Appendix pag. 35. He most highly commends and approves Mr. Marshals late Book, and in the 7th. page of his Letter, he saith expressly that Mr. Walter Marshal, in his Excellent Book lately published; hath largely opened this matter, and the true controversie of this day. Now it is true Mr. Marshal throughout his 10th. Direction from page 168 to page 193; insists much upon the opening of this matter, but he doth it so, that quite contrary to the answer which our Author hath now given to the Unbelievers Question, he maintains, 'That assurance that Christ is ours, that our sins are now forgiven, and we are now justified Men, is Essential to the very first Act of justifying Faith, whereby we first receive Christ, and rely on him for Justification and Salvation.

He distinguisheth indeed as our Author doth between the Direct and Reflex Act of Faith, and two things he hath there concerning the Reflex Act.

(1.) He doubts whether it be properly an Act of Faith at all, and rather thinks that it is an Act of Spiritual sense and feeling of what is within our selves; Page 172.

(2.) He positively affirms that the assurance we get by the Reflex Act of Faith, or of Spiritual sense, comes after Justification, and is not of the Essence of that Faith whereby we are justified and saved, and that many precious Saints are without it, and subject to many doubts that are contrary to it, so that they may not know at all that it shall go well with them at the day of Judgment; 10th. Direction. Page 172, 173.

Then for the Direct Act of Faith, he saith, (and so doth our Author after him) that it is two-fold. The (1st.) Direct Act of Faith is that whereby we Believe the Truth of the Gospel. The (2d.) Is that whereby we believe on Christ, as promised freely to us in the Gospel for our Salvation. By the (1st.) Act, Faith receiveth the means wherein Christ is conveyed to us. By the (2d.) It receiveth Christ himself and his Salvation in the means. — And both these Acts must be performed heartily with an unfeigned Love to the Truth, and a desire of Christ and his Salvation above all things: This is our Spiritual Appetite, which is necessary for our eating and drinking Christ, the food of Life, as a natural Appetite is for bodily nourishment. — We must receive the love of the Truth, by relishing the goodness and excellency of it — and this love must be to every part of Christs Salvation, to Holiness, as well as to the Forgiveness of sins. — The former of these Acts doth not immediately unite to Christ, because it is terminated only on the means of conveyance, the Gospel; yet it is a saving Act, if it be rightly performed, because it inclineth and disposeth the Soul to the latter Act, whereby Christ himself is immediately received into the heart. He that believeth the Gospel with hearty love and liking, as the most excellent Truth, will certainly with the like heartiness believe on Christ for his Salvation; *Psal.* 9. 10.

Therefore in the Scripture saving Faith is sometimes described by the former of these Acts, as if it were a meer believing the Gospel: Sometimes by the latter, as a believing on Christ, or in Christ; *Rom.* 10. 9, 10, 11. 1 *John* 5. 1, 12. — Then he saith that 'This Second Principal Act of Faith in Christ, includeth believing on God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and that it is the same thing with trusting in God. 4th. Direction, page 61, 62, 63. And elsewhere, he affirms that the Direct Acts of Faith include love.

Now touching these Direct Acts of Faith, we acknowledge that there is an Assurance Essential to the first of them whereby we believe the promises of the Gospel; and that assurance is two-fold, *Absolute* and *Conditional*. First, By our Faith of the

the Gospel we are *Absolutely sure* that God according to his promise doth give Christ, and Justification and Salvation through him unto all true penitent Believers. (2.) By our Faith of the Gospel we are *Conditionally sure*, that if we are true penitent Believers, God according to his promise doth give Christ; and Justification and Salvation through him unto us in particular. For the Conditional promises of the Gospel, being general to all penitent Believers, they comprehend all the Particulars of the same kind; and therefore it we believe with an absolute assurance that God justifies and saves through Christ, all penitent Believers, we must by necessary consequence believe at the same time with a conditional assurance that God justifies and will save us through Christ, if we be true penitent Believers. This conditional assurance with respect to our selves, upon supposition of our being true penitent Believers, is necessarily included in the former absolute Assurance, that God for Christs sake, justifies and saves all true penitent Believers.

Then for the second Act of justifying Faith, whereby we believe on Christ himself with fiducial consent, according to the Gospel, we freely grant that it also is accompanied with assurance; but (mark it) *not with an assurance that is Essential to it self*, and Essentially included in it self, but with the assurance, the double assurance of the *first assenting Act*, which though it go before, yet it continues and accompanies the second Act of fiducial consent. And for this reason we approve of that assertion of Mr. Marbals in the 179 page of his Book, 'That believing on Christ for Salvation as freely promised to us, must needs include a dependance on Christ, with a perswasion that Salvation shall be freely given, as it is freely promised to us. Thus he. And we subsume, But it is freely promised to us *only on Condition* that we through Grace are true penitent Believers, as we before proved at large. Therefore the perswasion or assurance of it, which accompanies our dependance on Christ by the Second Act of Faith, is a *Conditional perswasion or assurance*, as it concerns our selves and our own Salvation, in particular. Yet afterwards when by Reflex Acts of Faith and self Examination we clearly perceive (through the speciall assistance of the Holy Spirit) that we are indeed true penitent Believers, then our assurance becomes absolute, and we are absolutely perswaded and assured that Christ is ours, and that God is our God in Christ, and that through Christ we are justified and shall be saved. This is all the assurance that the Scriptures hold forth to us as attainable in this life by the ordinary assistance of Gods Spirit and Grace, and if any good Men have at any time by extraordinary favour and privilege attained to any other or more assurance; they had best keep it to themselves, and be very humble under it, and thankful to God for it; and they should not affirm it to be *Absolutely and Essentially necessary to the Fiducially Consenting Act of justifying saving Faith*, and by that means condemn all who have not *that sort of assurance*, as having yet no justifying saving Faith, but as being still in a state of nature, and Children of Wrath, and of the Devil.

It were easy to shew (if we had time and room for it here) that all the reasons, Scriptures and Examples which Mr. Marbal brings to prove, *That an absolute assurance (that Christ is now ours, that our sins are now pardoned, that we are justified, and shall be eternally saved)* is absolutely and essentially necessary to the direct Act of justifying Faith, whereby we first receive Christ and trust on him for Justification and Salvation; prove no such thing: The utmost that they prove, is that the foresaid assurances which we willingly admit, are partly antecedent to, and concomitant with, and partly consequent upon the Direct Act of Faith, whereby we receive Christ with fiducial consent, that through him we may be justified and saved.

But there is not one of them that proves, that an *absolute Assurance that Christ for ever present is ours, and that we are now justified and in the State of Salvation*; is essentially,

essentially necessary unto; and included in the direct Act of justifying Faith. And whereas it is Confidently said, that all our Reformed Divines were for this sort of Assurance as essential to the direct Act of that Faith whereby we are first justified, we Answer, That it is indeed said with Confidence enough, but it is a vain groundless Confidence, for though some might be of that false Opinion, yet it is notoriously false that all were; we shall at present give one considerable instance to the contrary, and our Instance shall be in Mr. Fox, the Author of the Book of Martyrs, who in his Book of Justification written against the Papists, says expressly, [*Sic mea fere ratio ut existimem, &c.*] Such is my gratis Judgment, that I think this Confident Perswasion of Mercy, and Assurance of the Promised Salvation, is not the thing which properly and absolutely delivers us from Sin, and justifies us before God; but that there is some other thing proposed in the Gospel, which must some way in Order of Nature go before this Assurance, and justifie us before God; for Faith in the Person of the Son necessarily goes before, which Faith in the Person of the Son, first reconciles us to God. Afterward a confident or sure perswasion of most certain mercy, follows this Faith: Concerning which Mercy, none of those who believe in Christ, can justly doubt. By this and more that Mr. Fox saith in the same place, it is clear as the Light, that he did not believe that an absolute Assurance of our being now pardoned, justified and reconciled to God is included in, and essential to the direct Act of Faith, whereby we are justified in the sight of God; but on the contrary he held that the direct Act of Faith in the Person of the Son of God whereby we are justified, goes before the said Assurance, and Assurance follows after it; which is what we believe, and so doth our Author with us; for he tells the Unbeliever, That a Man is not called to believe that he is in Christ. Mark the Expression, he doth not only say, [A Man is not called to believe, that he was in Christ before he believed.] For that Marshal and all but Antinomians do say; but he says, that a Man is not called to believe that he is in Christ (*pro presenti*) for this present, that his Sins are now pardoned, and he now a justified Man; but he is called to believe the Gospel Record, and to believe in Christ according to the Record, that is, he is to believe that he may be justified, and not that he is justified. But now Marshal, unto whom our Author appeals for the opening of this matter, hath so opened it, that he hath shew it up in darkness, Confusion and Self-contradiction, as it were no difficult task to demonstrate. He maintains confidently, (1.) That Assurance of our being now justified, and of the Pardon of our Sins, is necessarily and essentially included in the direct Act of justifying Faith. Pag. 169, 170, 171. 172, 173, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, &c.

(2.) He maintains, That all the Reprobate, who live in the visible Church, are by God strictly obliged under Pain of Eternal Damnation to believe with the foresaid justifying Faith and absolute Assurance, which is essential to it, that they are now justified, and that their Sins are now pardoned, though it be then and always false that they are justified, and their Sins pardoned, Pag. 202. 204.

Yet he saith, that this is but the Appearance of a great Absurdity, Pag. 171. whereby he gives us to understand either, (1.) That it is no real Absurdity to hold that God obliges Men under pain of Eternal Damnation to believe assuredly, that a falsehood is truth, and that they who are not pardoned, are pardoned. Or (2.) That he denies the Consequence, to wit, that God obliges the Reprobate to believe a falsehood: And the meaning of that is, that though he hath granted both the Premisses, yet he will stily deny the Conclusion; whereby men whose eyes are open, may see what a rare Gift of Reasoning Mr. Marshal was endowed with.

Again, though he maintain, that an absolute Assurance of our present Justification, and sure Eternal Salvation, is essential to the direct Act of justifying Faith, yet he saith, many precious Saints, who have that Faith, and that Assurance of Justification and Salvation which is essential to it, may not know at all, that it shall go well with them at the day of Judgment, and this for want. Pag. 173.

of the other *after-Assurance*; which comes by the *reflex Act*, and by Self-examination.

Now is not that a *strange Assurance*, which a Man hath by Faith, of his Eternal Salvation, whereby he *doth not know* at all, whether he shall be Eternally Saved or Eternally Damned, for want of another kind of Assurance by Spiritual Sense and feeling, whereby he may know, how it shall go with him at the Day of Judgment, whether he shall be then Eternally Saved or Damned! to what purpose serves the *first Assurance*, when a man can know nothing at all by it; without a *second Assurance*? Is not that a plain Indication, that the *first pretended Assurance* is nothing but an *ens rationis*, a Creature of a Mans own making, which hath no real Existence, but in his vain Imagination.

Our Author sometimes seems to be wiser than to believe such vain Fancies; and yet at other times he appears to be deeply in love with them; as when he most highly commends Mr. Marshals Book (in which we deny not but there are good things), as the most Sovereign Antidote against the Poyson of the new Divinity; and says, that he hath largely opened this matter.

For our parts, we are willing to impute this to his not having Attentively read that Book, and so to his not knowing, that Mr. Marshal did manifestly contradict and dispute against his Opinion, as a Limb or Joint of the new Divinity: But we are afraid his Unbeliever will be really scandalized at his telling him, that he is not called at the first to believe that he is now in Christ, that his Sins are pardoned, and he is now a justified Man; though in the same Letter he sends him to Marshals Book for Information and Direction in this very matter, and it tells him the quite contrary, and confidently maintains that an Unbeliever is called and commanded at first upon Pain of Eternal Damnation to believe with absolute Assurance by the direct Act of Faith in Christ, that he is now in Christ, his Sins pardoned and he a justified Man.

This we are afraid, will tempt his Unbeliever to say, Either, Sir, you believe this of Marshal or not; if you do not believe it, why do you commend his Book to me, as that which will give me best Direction in this matter, and preserve my Soul from being poysoned with the new Divinity? But if you do believe him, why do you contradict him, he telling me one thing, and you telling me the quite contrary, yea the contradictory thereof? Why do you also join with the new Divines against him or his Book, and go about to poison my Soul with the new Divinity, in the great Point of Assurance, its not being essential to the direct Act of justifying Faith, whereas the contrary Opinion of Marshal which you deny, was the great Engine wherewith our first Reformers battered down the Walls of Rome.

Thus our Author by his way of Writing is more like to hinder men from believing, and to harden them in their unbelief, than to be instrumental in Converting them from unbelief to Faith in Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, Unbeliever, This believing is hard?

Minister, This is a good doubt, but easily resolved.

Here again, the Minister makes himself ridiculous, and exposes himself to the scorn and contempt of the Unbeliever; for the Unbeliever makes no doubt of the matter, but positively asserts that this believing is hard, as being firmly persuaded in his Mind (without the least Hesitation or Doubt) that this believing is hard indeed, and when the Minister has heard him say, yea has put the Words in his Mouth, and made him to say positively (without doubting) that this believing is hard; then he answers him, and says this is a good doubt and easily resolved, and the plain English of that is, that no doubt but a Positive Affirmation, is a good doubt.

But supposing for once with the Minister that no doubt is a doubt, yet how doth he make it appear that it is a good doubt? for there are bad doubts as well as good doubts, and why may not this be a bad doubt, rather than a good doubt? Yes saith the Minister, I prove it and make it appear thus, that it is not a bad,



but a good doubt; because it bespeaks a man deeply humbled. Rarely proved! But why may it not as well bespeak a man to be deeply *hardened* in unbelief, and highly lifted up in pride? For were not the *Capernaizers* deeply hardened in unbelief, and yet when they heard Christ himself with his own Blessed mouth preaching to them of the great necessity and usefulness of believing on him, under the Figurative expressions of Eating his Flesh and Drinking his Blood, they both *doubted* and *disbelieved*, and thus expressed their doubts and unbelief. John 6. 42. *How is it that he saith, I came down from Heaven?* And V. 52. *How can this man give us his Flesh to eat?* And V. 60. *This is an hard saying, who can hear it?* Likewise those *Jews* and *Heathens* of whom Paul writes, 1 Cor. 1. 23. *That Christ Crucified was unto the one sort of them, a stumbling block, and unto the other foolishness*; could doubt and say, this believing in a Crucified Christ is hard, and in effect they did say it, and so they doubted, if that be to doubt; for they said it was an unreasonable foolish thing to believe to be saved by a crucified Man; and that was in effect to say, that it was hard to believe in Christ. For it is certainly hard for a reasonable man to believe, that which in his heart he judges to be unreasonable and foolish. But now did this bespeak those unbelieving *Jews* and *Heathens* to be deeply humbled? no sure it was so far from it, that it bespoke the quite contrary, it bespoke them deeply hardened in unbelief, and highly lifted up in pride and self conceit.

Our Author has another Argument to prove it to be a good doubt, because (says he) *Any body may see his own impotency to obey the Law of God fully, but few find the difficulty of believing*. Well, be it so, that few find the difficulty of believing, and that few doubt whether it be difficult or not; doth that prove that this particular unbeliever doubts, because he finds believing to be so difficult, that he is past all doubt of its being difficult, and thereupon positively affirms that it is difficult and hard to believe? He must have lost his reason that can deliberately think, that a Man who is fully convinced of the difficulty of believing, and thereupon affirms that it is hard to believe, hath a good doubt whether it be difficult or not; because the generality of other Men seldom think of believing, or endeavour to believe, and so find not the difficulty of it.

But (2.) suppose this particular Unbeliever do not find it so difficult to believe, as to be past all doubt that it is difficult; only his mind is brought to an *(equilibrium)* even balance, and hangs in suspense between these two, whether it be difficult, or whether it be easy to believe: This supposition being true, will prove indeed that the man hath a doubt in his mind concerning the difficulty of believing; but it doth not at all prove that it is a good doubt: The Truth is, such a doubt is evil and cannot be good; for the man ought to be fully persuaded in his mind, that to believe in Christ crucified with a saving Faith, it is really difficult and hard, yea impossible to Unregenerate Nature and without the Grace of God; but that to Regenerate Nature it is easy through the assistance of Gods special Grace. And so here can be no room at all for the Unbelievers good doubt.

Next our Author falls upon the resolving of the Unbelievers pretended good doubt. And in order thereunto, he asks him, 'What it is which he finds doth make believing difficult to him?

(1.) Our Author asks the Unbeliever 'Whether he finds it difficult to believe, because he is unwilling to be justified and saved? And this (saith he) the Unbeliever will deny: And he may well deny it, and further tell our Author, Sir, You are very impertinent to ask me such a Question, for you knew well enough without asking, that that could not be the reason wherefore I think it difficult to believe; for no man in his right wits, was ever unwilling to be justified and saved, that is unwilling to be happy; for it is naturally necessary unto all men to desire happiness, and therefore if the Justification and Salvation which you talk of, be necessary to make me happy, and if my happiness partly

partly consist therein; you know, I cannot be unwilling to be justified and saved, because I cannot be unwilling to be happy.

(2.) He asks the Unbeliever, 'Whether he finds it difficult to believe, because he is unwilling to be so saved by Jesus Christ, to the praise of Gods Grace in him, and to the avoiding of all boasting in himself? And he saith, The Unbeliever will surely deny this also. To which the Unbeliever may be supposed to answer, Sir, I thank you for your good opinion of me, by this I perceive you take me to be deeply humbled indeed, but how you should come to be sure of that, I cannot understand; for I am not sure my self that I am so deeply humbled. It is true, I confess and I am sure of it, that I am willing to be saved, that is, to be happy: But I am not yet sure that I am willing to be so saved in that way of deep humiliation. I find by your Letter that those whom you confess to be already true Believers, find it difficult to be thoroughly willing to be so saved by Jesus Christ, as to give all the glory of their Salvation to Gods Grace, and to take nothing of it to themselves; how then is it possible for you to be sure that I who am an Unbeliever will not confess that I find a great unwillingness in my nature to be saved in such a way of self-denial and deep humiliation, and that that very unwillingness makes it very difficult for me to believe in a Crucified Christ: you cannot be sure, but I may be such an Unbeliever as will not deny what I really find to be the natural frame and temper of my heart: And you who are a Believer and a Minister should not teach me to deny it against my natural Conscience, nor blame me for confessing it: And when you have heard my ingenuous confession, if you think my heart is in a very ill frame, and that I am a very wretched creature, you should give me what help you can towards the getting of my nature changed, and my heart deeply humbled; but you think I am deeply humbled already because I said, this believing is hard, whereas for any thing you know to the contrary, the true reason of my so saying, might be because I am not yet deeply humbled. Yet however it be, I thank you for your good opinion of me.

(3.) He asks the Unbeliever, 'Whether he finds it difficult to believe, because he distrusts the Truth of the Gospel Record; and then adds, that he dare not own this.'

To which again the Unbeliever may reasonably enough Answer, Sir, What mean you by this, do you mean that I dare not own it because of you, or because of mine own *natural Conscience*? If you mean that I dare not own it because of you, then it seems you threaten me, that if I confess my self to you, and tell you what distrust I find in my own heart, you will persecute me, or do me some mischief: This better becomes a Minister of the Inquisition, than a Minister of the Reformed Church. Or if you mean that I dare not own it, because of my *natural Conscience*, as if it were against my natural Conscience to distrust the Truth of the Gospel record; how do you know that? You are indeed a man of Confidence enough; but you may be mistaken for all that; And I tell you that in this you are mistaken, for it is an ordinary thing with us Unbelievers to distrust the Truth of the Gospel Record, and I find that same distrust often within my self. I cannot conceal it from God who made and Governs the World, and knows all things in the World, as natural Religion teacheth us, and many of us believe this, though we do not believe your Supernatural positive Religion; and since I cannot conceal it from God, why should I be afraid to confess it to Man, especially to the Ministers of Supernatural Positive Religion, a part of whose Office it is, to maintain the Credibility and Truth of the Gospel Record against Unbelievers, and to do what they can by good and solid Arguments to prove the Credibility and Truth of the Gospel, and thereby to Convince and Convert Unbelievers to the Faith of it, and to Faith in Christ according to it. Sir, If you believe that Record your self, and can give a reason of the Faith and Hope that is in you, as ye are bound to do; you should not discourage Unbelievers from confessing the true Grounds of their not believing in Christ; but should rather desire and intreat them to tell you their grounds ingenuously what ever they be, that when you know them, you may answer them, and

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show there is no solidity in them; by this means you may be instructed to bring Men off from their unbelief; and then by laying before them the solid Grounds and Reasons you have for the Credibility and Truth of the Gospel-Record; you may through the Blessing of God Convince and Convert such Unbelievers as I am, to the Faith of the Gospel, and to Faith in Christ according to the Gospel.

(4.) He asks the Unbeliever whether he finds it difficult to believe, *Because* he doubts of Christs ability, or *goodwill* to save? And then he saith, that this is to contradict the Testimony of God in the Gospel.

To this the Unbeliever may readily reply, Sir, What do you mean by Christs Ability or Goodwill to save? Whether do you mean it of his Ability or Goodwill to save *others*, to wit, all the Elect in general, or of his ability or good-will to save *me in particular*? If you mean it of his Ability or Good-will to save *others*, to wit, all the Elect in General, then I tell you that so far as I do *historically* and *Dogmatically* believe the Scripture to be the Word of God, I do not at all doubt of Christs ability and good-will to save all the Elect in General, for I find that God hath clearly testified so much in the Gospel, and I firmly believe his testimony, and do not in the least contradict it.

But if you mean it of his ability or willingness to save *me in particular*, I desire you to name the Chapter and Verse in the Gospel, where God hath testified, that Christ is willing to save *me in particular*, so that I cannot doubt of his willingness to save me without contradicting that Testimony. O You cannot positively say that I am one of the Elect whom Christ is certainly willing to save; because I am yet an Unbeliever, and so long as I am an Unbeliever, neither you nor I can possibly know without an immediate Revelation whether I be one of the Elect or not. I may be, or I may not be one of them: But neither you nor I can say determinately that I am certainly the one of them, and not the other. If you shall say, (and you have nothing else to say) 'That whether I be one of the Elect or not, I must believe without doubting that Christ is able and willing to save me,' otherwise I contradict the Testimony of God in the Gospel: Then indeed you will say something to the purpose. But We have not yet done, for I must now ask you, whether you would have me believe without doubting that whether I be Elect or Non-Elect, Christ is willing to save me absolutely or conditionally. And if (1.) Christ be willing to save me an Unbeliever absolutely, and that whether I be Elect or not, then it will follow by necessary consequence that one Unbeliever shall be infallibly saved, even tho he be a Reprobate; and if one why not another, and another? yea, why not all? *cum sit eadem ratio unius et omnium*. Since there is the same reason for one and all. The consequence of this from Christs being willing to save me an Unbeliever absolutely, and that whether I be Elect or not, is clear and unavoidable; for Christ never fails to do that which he is willing absolutely to do, if he be able to do it; but he is certainly as able as he is willing: Therefore if Christ be both able and willing absolutely to save me an Unbeliever whether I be Elect or not, then I an unbeliever whether Elect or not, shall be infallibly saved. This would be good news and rare Gospel to Unbelievers and Reprobates, if there were any Testimony of God for it in the Old or New Testament. But an Unbeliever may doubt of Christs willingness to save in this absolute sense, without fear of contradicting the Testimony of God in the Gospel.

(2.) If to avoid this absurdity, you say that whatever I be, Elect or not-Elect, Christ is willing to save me an Unbeliever, conditionally, *if I sincerely believe and Repent*; now I Understand you very well, and have nothing to say but that you are come off from your principle, and fall in with those you call the *New Divines*; and preached to me the new Divinity, that there is a *Conditional Gospel Covenant*, according to the tenour whereof, Christ is willing to save any unbeliever, *whatever he be*, on condition that he sincerely and effectually believe. If to break through this net in which you are caught, you shall say, that if I be *not one of the Elect*, Christ is no wise will-

ling to save me, either absolutely, or conditionally? I reply, why did you then, speaking to me in particular, say, That for me no doubt of Christ's good-will to save, is to contradict the Testimony of God in the Gospel? The Question was not, whether or no Christ be willing to save some other men; but whether he be willing to save ME or not? And whereas you made a shew as if you would resolve my doubt by determining that question in the affirmative, that Christ is willing to save me, and that I must not doubt of his willingness to save me; or if I do, then I contradict God's Word: Now to keep up your separation from those you call the New Divines, you would bring your self off by telling me, that you do not know whether Christ be any wise willing absolutely or conditionally to save me. Is not this an excellent way to resolve my doubt which you put into my head, whether Christ be willing to save me, to tell me that truly you do not know whether he be any wise willing to save me or not, but if I doubt of his willingness to save some other men, I contradict the Word of God? Thus you resolve my doubt (Whether Christ be any wise willing to save me or not?) by confirming it. I say, I doubt of Christ's willingness to save me an Unbeliever; and you say, you doubt of it too, for you do not know whether he be willing or not; and because the thing is thus doubtful both to me and you, therefore I must no more doubt of it. This is the best way that you have to resolve this doubt of mine, which your self have raised, unless you go over to your Brethren, and say, that Christ is undoubtedly willing to save me, (whatever I be) upon condition that I sincerely believe and repent. And yet you shall not escape into their Camp without one thrust more at you, I mean without objecting one difficulty more which lies in my way to believing. This last Objection I have learned of your self likewise, and therefore I expect a clear answer from you, for it's to be hoped that you are a wiser man than to raise a Spirit which you cannot lay again. Thus then I argue as you have taught me:

Unbeliever. I cannot believe on Jesus Christ, because of the difficulty of the *Act* of this Faith, for a Divine Power is needful to draw it forth, which I find *Let. pag. 17. not.* This is a very powerful argument to prove the difficulty of believing, for if it be impossible for me to believe, then it is difficult, with a witness for me to believe: But it is impossible for me to believe without a Divine Power, that bring needful to draw forth the *Act* of believing, and I do not find that divine Power in or with me: Therefore it is difficult for me to believe. This is the argument which you have taught me, and it has the appearance of a demonstration; at least it proves invincibly that I had reason to say before, without any doubt, That this believing is hard; though by your Logick which draws quilibet ex quolibet, darkness out of light, &c. ye inferred that I was a good doubter, because I did not doubt at all, but was sure that it was hard for me to believe: and since ye your self have furnished me with so strong an Argument to Evince the Truth of what I said, that it is hard for me to believe; I do expect from you a clear, solid, satisfactory answer; otherwise I shall be tempted to suspect you to be your self a secret unbeliever, and that your design in suggesting such Arguments to Unbelievers, and not giving a solid Answer to them, is to confirm such as I am, in unbelief and (as it may happen) to increase the number of unbelievers: Or if I should be mistaken in suspecting that you your self had such a formal design, yet I no wise doubt but am sure that the thing hath a natural tendency to confirm and harden sinners in their unbelief.

Ministers Answer. I desire you Unbeliever, not to suspect me as if I were secretly one of your Fraternity, nor yet to be afraid of any mischief that may ensue upon my method for Converting Unbelievers, which I have published for the Instruction of the younger Ministers. To cure you of your suspicion of me, and to prevent any hurt to your self or others; I have given an Answer to your Argument which you had from me, and thus it is word for word. [Believing

in Jesus Christ is no work, but a resting on Jesus Christ. And this pretence (of its being difficult) is as unreasonable, as that if a Man weary'd with a Journey, and who is not able to go any farther, should argue, I am so tired that I am not able to lye down; when indeed he can neither stand nor go. This is my answer, Unbeliever, and what do you think of it? Is it not a clear solid satisfactory answer? Do not you see the light breaking forth from all the parts of it? Do not you also see the darkness of your Objection flying away before the light of it, as the small dust and dry leaves fly before the wind.

Unbelievers Reply. Sir, I will tell you by and by what I see: But First, I must tell you what I think, and to be plain with you, I think this your last answer is much like all the rest that went before, there is hardly a good one amongst them; and the difference is, that this is the worst in the whole pack. And to make this good, I offer these things following to the consideration of all men of common sense and reason, as well as of Christian Believers.

(1.) The Objection saith, That Faith is a difficult Act, and proves it to be difficult, because, impossible without a Divine Power, which the Unbeliever finds not. To which you answer, That Believing is no work, but a resting, and so by changing the Terms and putting Work for Act, you think to impose upon silly Women and such like Persons, and to make them think that you have said much, when you have said nothing or worse than nothing; And that you have answered the Objection, when you have rather confirmed it: The Objection says and proves that Faith is a difficult Act, because, impossible without a Divine Power; This you do not deny, but only deny that it is a work, and so that it is a difficult work. If then there be an Act that is no Work, (as you seem to intimate) tho Faith should not be a difficult work, yet it may be a difficult Act, so difficult that a man cannot believe aright without Divine Assistance, and this was all the Objection was designed to prove, for it makes no mention of the word (work); it neither affirms nor denies Faith to be a work.

(2.) I demand why you change the Terms and deny Faith to be a work, whereas the Objection did not affirm it to be a work, but to be an act, and a difficult act; because impossible to Humane Nature without the Powerful Assistance of God? I cannot easily imagine what reason you had to deny Faith to be a work, instead of denying it to be an act, and a difficult act; if you intended to answer the Objection which only affirms Faith to be a difficult act. But whatever reason might move you to deny Faith to be a work, which I do not well understand; yet this I know, that your denying Faith to be a work, falls out very unluckily for you, and turns to your own shame; for you your self had

Let. page 1, said before, and proved from Scripture, so wit. from John 6. 28, 29. That Faith is a work, yea that it is the work of God, the great work of God, the great work which we do, and which we cannot do too soon. These are your own words: And yet within the compass of six Pages after, you absolutely deny that Faith is any work at all. This brings to my mind the old saying, *Oportet mendacem esse memorem*, A liar had need to have a good memory. And by this sign and token I know that you are a weak deceived man your self, or that you are a deceiver of others. It will no wise relieve you to say, that though Faith be a Work, yet it doth not justify as a work, but as an Instrument. For (1.) here you absolutely deny it to be a work, and that in answer to an Objection which did not relate to Justification. Therefore (2.) I say that here was no occasion to speak of Justification at all, and consequently no occasion to affirm that Faith justifies as an Instrument, and to deny that it justifies as a work; for the Question here is not at all, how we are justified by Faith, whether by Faith as a work, or by Faith as an instrument; but all the Question is, whether Faith be difficult to an Unbeliever or not. The Objection affirms it to be difficult, because it is impossible to Humane Nature without the Grace of God; you in answer to the Objection, deny it to be difficult, because it is no work. So that it is evident this your denying Faith to be a



work, relates not to the manner of Faiths justifying a Man; but to the difficulty of a Man getting and using of Faith. (3.) It is altogether impertinent here to deny Faith to be a work, in the Office or Act of Justification; for though it were granted, that Faith is not considered as a work in the Act of justifying, yet if it be a work in its own Act of Existence, the Objection remains in its full Strength and unanswered; for still it is true which the Objection asserts, that its very difficulty for an Unbeliever to produce the Act, is its Work of Faith. This you saw, and therefore to cut the Sinews, and to take away the main force of the Argument, you absolutely deny Faith to be a Work. This was your Intention in saying that Faith is no work; otherwise your Answer was wholly impertinent to the Objection. And indeed it must be confessed, that if your Answer were true, if it were true that Faith is no Work at all in any sense; the Objection hath lost all its Strength, and falls dead to the ground. But that your Answer is not true, I have said it already from your self under your own hand, affirming and proving that Faith is a great Work, which we cannot do too soon.

And least you should endeavour to bring your self off, by saying that Faith is no outward bodily Work, and that, that was your meaning in saying that Faith is no Work, I give you a third Answer, and therein,

Thirdly, I demand, what you mean by the Word (Work) when you say that Faith is no Work? Whether you do mean an outward bodily Work, or an inward Heart-work? And (1.) I appeal to your own Conscience, that you did not mean an outward Bodily Work; for no Body ever said or thought, that Faith is an outward Bodily Work. And why should you in Answer to an Argument deny, that which no Body ever affirmed; yea and lay the main stress too of your Answer upon that denial?

(2.) You could not give that Answer to such an Objection, unless you was in a Dream; or out of your right Mind; for to Answer so as to say, that Faith is not an outward Bodily work, but an inward Heart-work, doth not in the least touch the Objection; though that be most true that Faith is no outward bodily work, yet if Faith be an inward Heart-work, the Objection stands in its full force and strength; for inward Heart-work, is the most hard and difficult work, therefore if Faith be an inward Heart-work, it must needs be still hard and difficult to believe, which is the very thing that the Objection was brought to prove; therefore if you intended to Answer the Objection by denying Faith to be a Work; you must also intend to deny that it is an inward Heart-work, and so that it is any work at all either inward or outward; and if that were true, you had indeed effectually answered the Objection: But that is not true, for

Fourthly, It is notoriously false, that Faith is no inward Heart-work, for to be an inward Work of the Heart is nothing, but to be an inward Act of the Heart; and it is most certain and evident that Faith is an inward Act of the Heart; *Bel. p. 7.* for Believers (as you do confess) find by Spiritual Sense and feeling that Faith is an inward Act of the Heart; and the Scripture saith expressly that with the Heart Men believe unto Righteousness, Rom. 10. 9, 10.

And therefore Faith is an inward Work of the Heart, consequently it is manifestly false which you say, that Faith is no Work.

(3.) Whereas you say, that Faith is no Work, but a resting on Jesus Christ: I reply, (1.) That if Faith be no Work either outward, or inward, because it is a resting; then Faith is no inward Act, for an inward Act is an inward Work, and if Faith be an inward Act, it is also an inward Work; but you your self, Page 7th. of your Letter expressly say, that Faith is an inward Act, and I have proved it by Scripture to be an inward Act, therefore it is utterly false which you say, that Faith is no Work at all, no not an inward Work, because it is a resting on Christ.

(2.) Faith is both an inward Work, and a resting on Christ. Resting on Christ is a Figurative Expression, and Faith is called by that Name, it is said to be a resting on Christ, because the effect or consequent of the Act of Faith in Christ, is the

rest.

rest of the Soul, the Satisfaction, and quiet of the Mind, the ease of the Heart, and the Peace of the Conscience.

(9.) If this sense of the form of Speech, (*Resting on Christ*), by which the Act of Faith is expressed, as it is a means of causing, and as it connotes the fore-said effects; if (I say) this do not please you, but you will have *resting on Christ*, to signify a total Cessation from any inward Act. Then I reply,

(1.) That you seem to be shifting about from one Sect to another, and for a time to have taken up your rest among the *Quietists*, the Disciples of *Molino's* at Rome, or of *Madame de Bourignon* in France. For it is said to be their Principle, that a man should cease from all Action, outward and inward; and when the Soul is in a State of Non-Action, and perfect rest from all Labour whatsoever, then a Man is most Religious, and best disposed for converse with and enjoyment of God.

(2.) If Faith be no inward Act, but a resting on Christ in such a sense, as that it is a Cessation from, and a Negation of all Act and Action; then you need no more to endeavour the Conversion of me, or of any other Unbeliever; for if that be true Faith, then a mere nothing is true Faith; and I will assure you, I have that nothing, as much as ever I can have: for You your self in your Letter call me an Unbeliever, and that signifies one that wants Faith; now if I want the Act of Faith, I must needs have the Negation of the Act of Faith, (in such a way as a Negation can be had), and this Negation is a perfect Cessation and resting from any Act of Faith, and further, this Negation, Cessation and Resting is Faith it self, (according to you). Therefore it follows by clear and necessary Consequence that by wanting the Act of Faith, I have Faith; and by being an Unbeliever, I am as good a Believer as you self. Therefore you need no more labour to convert me, than I need to convert you; but let us both rest together among the new *Quietists*, if you please.

(6.) And now, Sir, I would be content to rest, if you would let me alone; but are not you like to disturb my rest, by clamouring against me, that I am unreasonable in pretending that it is hard and difficult for an Unbeliever to believe in Christ without the powerful Assistance of Gods Grace? And to prove that I am unreasonable in this, you boldly affirm it upon your Word (as your manner is), and with appearance of much Gravity, you illustrate it by a similitude taken from a weary Traveller, who is so tired with his journey that he can neither stand still, nor yet lay his head down to rest, but must of necessity lie down and rest. Now (say you) if this Man in these circumstances should say, Oh I find it difficult to lie down, for I am so tired that I am not able to lie down, though indeed I can neither stand nor go; would it not be accounted very unreasonable? And just so, it is unreasonable for you an Unbeliever to pretend, That it is so difficult for you to believe, that you cannot do it without the powerful Grace of God; for believing is resting, it is ceasing from all Action, and consequently it is so far from being difficult, that it is one of the easiest things in the World; it is of that Nature, that you cannot avoid the doing of it, no more than a weary Traveller can avoid lying down, when he is so tired, that indeed he can neither stand nor go. This is the force of your Reasoning in the 17th. Page of your Letter, line 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. whereby you would prove me to be unreasonable, in saying that it is difficult for an Unbeliever to believe on Christ without the Grace of God.

I have considered this your profound Reasoning, for the Easiness of Believing on Christ without the Grace of God, and now that I understand it, my fear of being disturbed by it, is over and gone; yea I am beholding to you for it, and I thank you Sir. For this which I was afraid would have been a disturbance to me, is like to be a means of bringing us both to rest.

I have told you before, what I thought; now (according to my Promise) I will tell you what I see. Why, in short, by the Light of this your Illustration, I see that I (an Unbeliever) am as good a Believer as you are, and that it must be so, and cannot be otherwise; for as the weary Traveller that cannot possibly either

either

ther stand or, go, must sit down, and cannot; but his downy ankles are not hindered by force or Miracle: So you and I cannot but believe, unless we be hindered by Miracles. But there is no fear of that, God hath wrought many Miracles heretofore (to persuade men to believe, but he never did nor will work a Miracle to hinder us from believing.

I will never more Object the difficulty of Believing, for want of the powerful Grace of God, to enable me, therefore, for if this Doctrine be true, there needs no Grace to enable us to believe, for believing is resting and doing nothing, and that we can do as well without, as with the help of Grace; nay we cannot but do it, unless we be hindered from resting and doing nothing, and be irresistibly stirred up to Work and Act by Miracle. But, as I said, there is no fear of that, since Working and Acting would hinder us from Believing; And to hinder us from Believing, is contrary to the true use and end of Miracles.

And Sir, as I will never complain more of the difficulty of believing, so in the Name of the whole Fraternity of Unbelievers, I thank you for your great kindness to them, and for this sweet and comfortable Doctrine (if it be true) which you have taught us all in your Letter, which I hear is much cryed up by some Women in London, who love rest and ease.

Now we might have all rested quietly together, were it not for those you call the *New and Young Divines*, whom you have charged with *Pelagianism*. This was not wisely done of you, for you have thereby awakened them from their rest, and it is to be feared, that by loud Recriminations, they will disturb you and us both, and proclaim the secret to the World, that you your self are Confederate with *Pelagians, Semipelagians, and Unbelievers*. For it is undeniable matter of Fact, that it is a branch of *Pelagianism*, and the very Root and Heart of *Semipelagianism*, That Men can believe in Christ with a justifying Faith, by the Power of Nature, without the Supernatural Grace of God. And if your similitude hold good, men not only can believe, but which is more, they cannot possibly choose, but they must of Necessity believe without the help of Grace, unless they be hindered by a Miracle exciting them to Act and Work, and to cease from rest. Sir, how you can come to Rest and Peace with those brisk *Young Divines*, whose Age inclines them to Action, more than to Rest, I do not pretend to know; but this I know, that upon your fore said Principle the Unbeliever and you are agreed; and if you will be steadfast and stand to your Principle, we shall live together in perfect quietness, and never more differ about Believing.

Thus we have given an account of our Authors Way and Method of Converting an Unbeliever to Faith in Christ; (which is more than a resting on Christ, for it is a Grace whereby we assent to Jesus his being the Christ, the Son of God and only Saviour of Men; and Consent to take him for our Prince and Saviour, and as such receive him on his own Terms, and then rest, rely, and trust on him for Justification, &c.) We have shewed also, what a weak and ridiculous way and Method it is, and how easily an Unbeliever may Answer all that he hath said in the 16. and 17. Pages of his Letter mentioned before; except a few at his first setting out, he hath hardly made one right step in the whole course of that Advice, which he takes upon him to give unto Ministers, how they ought to deal with Unbelievers in labouring to Convert them unto Faith in Christ. He hath plainly betrayed our Cause to the Unbeliever, who hath brought him by his last Objection, to take up with a Piece of *Pelagianism*, and with the grossest *Semipelagianism* that hath been heard of in the Christian Church; so weak is he (not wicked we hope) that he could think of no other way to Answer that Objection, but by denying that Faith is any Work at all (though therein he shamefully contradicts himself, and the express Word of God) and by affirming that it is a resting, in such a sense, as imports that it is neither Work nor Act, but a meer Cessation from Working and Acting, a doing nothing at all; and from thence he labours to shew the Unbeliever

that

that it is *not difficult* to believe, and illustrates it by such a similitude as will make any considering man who reads it and understands the use he makes of it, to think that he must be a *Semipelagian*, who holds that a man can believe unto Justification without any Subjective Supernatural Grace of God at all.

Whereas he ought to have acknowledged the Truth of the Objection, that it is indeed *difficult and impossible* too, for a natural man by the power of nature ever to believe, but that it is possible and easy too by the Grace of God. And then he should have directed the Unbeliever unto the *means* whereby Grace to believe is ordinarily obtained from God through Christ, and should have advised him to wait, and continue waiting on God in the use of his appointed means, and particularly to be much in praying, as well as he can, for Grace to help in time of need, and desiring the prayers of Christs Ministers and People. But not a word of this, nay, instead of advising the Unbeliever to use *Gods means*, and seek the Grace of Faith from God through Christ, he gives him to understand that Faith is nothing but a *resting* from all work and action, and that it is no more difficult to believe; than it is for a *weary Traveller* to *lie down and rest*, when he is so tired that he can neither stand nor go. And after he hath told the Ministers that they ought thus to resolve the doubts and answer the arguments of Unbelievers, he hath the confidence to conclude that by such reasonings with an Unbeliever from the Gospel, the Lord will (as he hath often done) convey Faith to him, and joy and peace by believing. This is like all the rest, the Conclusion and the Premises are at irreconcilable variance with one another. The Conclusion saith that the Lord will convey Faith to the Unbeliever, by the reasonings in the premises, and yet one of those reasonings is that Faith is nothing but a resting, and such a resting as signifies a Cessation from all actions, and that an Unbeliever needs no more help to believe, than a *weary Traveller* needs help to lie down and rest, when he is so tired that he can neither stand nor go. We think it is a sort of Blasphemy, to say wittingly and willingly, that such reasonings as some of those we have noted in the 16 and 17 Pages of the Letter, are either in and from the Gospel, or that the Lord makes use of such *resting* for converting, *conveying* Faith into the Hearts of his People. And because in this part of his Letter, he speaks to us that are Ministers, and either bids us tell the Unbeliever so and so, or else he affirms that we do tell him so, and so; we must declare to the World that we will follow his advice no further, than we find it agreeable to Scripture and Reason, (which sometimes we do find, and oftentimes the contrary, as we have proved), but as for what he affirms, that Ministers tell the Unbeliever, that Faith is *not difficult*, that it is no more difficult to an Unbeliever, than lying down is to a man when he is so tired and weary, that he can neither stand nor go; we protest we are none of those Ministers, we never did, and through Grace never will tell any Unbeliever such an *abominable falsehood*. We know no other Ministers but our Author that Preaches such Doctrine, and we have endeavoured to make him ashamed of it, in hopes to bring him off from it. We trust that after we have thus publicly declared against our Authors Way and Method of Converting Unbelievers to Faith in Christ, and plainly shewed the falsehood and folly of it in several particulars, the World will not be so unjust as to reproach the *Non-Conformist Ministers in England* with that *Ridiculous way of Preaching the Gospel* to Unbelievers, which we our selves have consulted and exposed, on purpose to prevent the *Scandal* which might otherwise arise if such things should be suffered to pass current among us, without any publick disapproving of them.





that which they do not fear, but only for their own ends would make simple People believe that they fear. So that for ought we know, it may be either true or false, that he and his party have such fears of us. But the Lord himself knows, and we know, that they have no just cause to entertain such fears and jealousies of us; and it is a sure sign that they have but little if any Christian Love, when without cause, they entertain such jealous fears of their Brethren, that they are departed or will depart from the Truth of the Gospel, more than *Pelagius*. And as to what he says, that our Cause is *coincident with that of Arminius and Pelagius*, we are as sure that it is false, as we can be that there is any such thing as truth or falsehood in the World. And our Author also must needs know it to be false, and must lye against his knowledge and conscience, if he knows what the Errors of *Pelagius* were, and that we are (as he affirms us to be) *middle-way-men*, who steer a middle course between the Orthodox and the *Arminians*. For the great fault, that these *middle-way-men* are charged with is, that they hold Universal Redemption in such a sense, as neither to agree with the Orthodox, that is, the most rigid Calvinists, who (contrary to the express mind of *Calvin*) deny that in any sound sense Christ can be said to have Redeemed all mankind; nor yet with the *Arminians* who affirm that Christ hath Redeemed all the Reprobate World, in the same sense that he hath Redeemed his Select People, whom he chose in Christ before the foundation of the World unto special effectual Grace in this life, and unto eternal Glory hereafter in the life to come. This is to be a *middle-way-man*, to hold universal Redemption in such a sense as neither pleaseth the *Arminian*, nor the Rigid *Antiarminian*. This our Author knows well enough, and if he knows as well what were the Errors of *Pelagius*, then he cannot choose but know that it is a lye to say that Our Cause is *Coincident with the cause of Pelagius*: For to be *Coincident* is to be the same. But it is not possible, that our cause should be the same with *Pelagius*'s cause, if we be *middle-way-men*, and hold universal Redemption as we are said to be and to do; for *Pelagius* did not hold but denied universal Redemption from sin, or punishment of sin; and it was accounted one of the *Pelagian Errors* above twelve hundred years ago, that he so denied universal Redemption. This may be unknown to our Author, and he may be apt to think that sure this is a Fiction of the *middle-way-men*; but if he be ignorant of this matter of fact, let not his ignorance make him boldly deny it, before he know what evidence there is for the Truth of it. We give him these two Arguments to prove the Truth of this matter of fact, that *Pelagius* denied universal Redemption.

(1.) It is known and acknowledged by all who have any understanding of these matters, and our Author himself knows it, That *Pelagius* denied Original sin; from whence it follows by necessary Consequence that he must needs also deny Universal Redemption of all Mankind. For Infants that dye in their Infancy before they commit any actual sin, are a considerable part of Mankind: the Infants who from the beginning of the World have dyed, and who daily do dy, and hereafter will be dying to the Worlds end, and that both within and without the Church, before they commit any actual sin, will make up a vast number; even many Millions of the race of Mankind. But *Pelagius* denied that these Infants who so dye in their Infancy, have any sin either Original or Actual to be redeemed from, and therefore he must needs deny also that they were Redeemed; and consequently he must needs deny universal Redemption of all Mankind. Where there is, no manner of sin, there is no manner of punishment due for sin, and consequently no room for Redemption by the Blood and Death of Christ either from sin or punishment. But *Pelagius* denied that Infants who dy in their Infancy have any manner of sin, or that any manner of punishment is due to them for their sin. Therefore *Pelagius* denied that such Infants are Redeemed by the Blood and Death of Christ either from sin or punishment, and consequently he denied universal Redemption.

(2.) Our Second Argument to prove the truth of this matter of Fact is from the testimony of *Augustin*, who is a very competent witness, because he lived at the same time with *Pelagius*, and wrote against him, and confuted his Errors and Heresies. Now *Augustin* in his writings against *Pelagius* and his Disciples, testifies plainly that they denied universal Redemption on the account aforesaid. For thus he writes: *Contra duas Epistolas Pelagianorum*, lib. 2. ad Bonifacium, cap. 2. *Manichei dicunt Deum bonum non omnium naturarum esse creatorem: Pelagiani dicunt, Deum non esse omnium aeternum in hominibus mundatorem, salvatorem, liberatorem. Catholica utroque redarguit, &c.* The Manicheans say, That the good God is not the Creator of all natures. The Pelagians say, That God is not the Purifier, the Saviour, the Deliverer or Redeemer of all Ages among men: But the Catholick Church refuses them both; defending both against the Manicheans the Creature of God, lest any nature should be denied to be made by him; and also against the Pelagians, that the human nature which is lost in all Ages, might be sought out and saved. Again the same *Augustin* in several other of his Books proves against the Pelagians, from 2 Cor. 5. 14. both that all mankind, even Infants who dy in their Infancy, are guilty of Original sin, and also that in some sense, all are Redeemed by the death of Christ. In the Second Book of his imperfect Work against *Julian* a Pelagian Bishop. Chap. 28. having alledged 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15. *We thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, &c.* He adds, *Unde colligitur quod dicit Apostolus, ergo omnes mortui sunt, & pro omnibus mortuus est: Dic aperte, mortui parvuli non sunt, qui peccatum nullum habent; morte pro se Christi, in qua baptizentur, non opus habent. Jam dic evidenter, quod latenter sentis, quoniam suis proditi tua disputatione quod sentis.* From which words we gather, or infer for what the Apostle saith, Therefore all are dead, and he (Christ) died for them all: say plainly, Infants are not dead, who have no sin. They have no need of the death of Christ for them, into which they should be baptized. Now speak out evidently, that which thou thinkest secretly, for thou dost sufficiently discover by thy Disputation, what it is that thou thinkest. By this and the foregoing passage of *Augustin*, it is very evident that the Pelagians first denied that Infants had any Original sin. Secondly, That Christ died for Infants to Redeem them either from sin, or punishment of sin. For though they declined to speak out, and say plainly that Christ died not for Infants, yet they really believed, and held it for a truth, that he did not dy for Infants to Redeem them, because they were not guilty of any evil either of sin or punishment, from which they could be Redeemed. By these two Arguments our Author and others may plainly see that the Pelagians denied universal Redemption by the blood-shedding and death of Christ. And this being so, how is it possible that we should be middle-way-men, who hold universal Redemption, and yet that our cause should be coincident with that of Pelagius who denied universal Redemption? Surely our Author cannot think both these things to be true of us, without supposing us to believe both parts of a contradiction at once. But whatever he himself may be able to do as to believing of contradictions, he is greatly mistaken if he think that we have so strong a Faith, or so wide a Swallow. For we that know our selves much better than he doth, declare sincerely that we were never Masters of such a Faith as can believe known contradictions; and that we could never make both ends of a contradiction meet, so as to be able to swallow them down both at once. Either then our Author knew that the Pelagians deny Original sin and universal Redemption, or he knew it not; if he knew that they deny both, how can he be excused from lying against his Conscience, in telling the World in Print such a known untruth and contradictory falsehood, that we are Middle-way-men, and that our cause is coincident with that of Pelagius, that is, that we are for the middle-way and the extreme way, for the middle-way and not for the middle-way at the same time. But if he knew not what the cause of Pelagius was, and is, with what Faith and Conscience could he say that our cause is coincident, or is the same, with the cause of Pelagius? Is it lawful for him, and his judicious Observers to defame the Ministers

Ministers of Christ, and to charge them with *Pelagian Heresy*, and Confederacy with *Pelagian Hereticks*, when they do not well know what the *Pelagian Heresy* was? Hath our *Author* a privilege boldly to affirm what he doth not know nor understand? And is he fit to inform the people of that which he is ignorant of, and wherein he needs to be informed himself? We expect the People, for whose Information, he pretends to write, will be more just and reasonable than to believe the *Calumnies* wherewith this man either maliciously or ignorantly asperses us; especially when they may clearly see that his *Calumnies* do not hang together, but are inconsistent, and contradict one another; which is a sure mark whereby to know a *Calumniator* and false witness; *Mark 14. 56.* We do not positively say that he doth thus calumniate us out of *meer malice*, but we are sure it is and must be either out of *malice or ignorance*; and we willingly incline to the more charitable (which is the safer) side, that he doth it rather out of pure *ignorance and blind zeal*, than out of *meer malice*, and *Cain-like* hatred of his Brethren. But whatever moved him to it, the thing it self is unwarrantable and injurious, for which he must give an account to that God who is an infinitely more *judicious Observer* than he or any of his party; and who, as he *observes* all our opinions and practices, so he judges always aright according to the true merits of every cause; and in this cause we can with a good conscience lift up our face to the Lord our God and say, Lord, thou whose understanding is infinite, and from whom nothing can be hid, and who hast infinite power and right to punish us with everlasting destruction, if we now lye to thee, and dissemble with thee, thou knowest that our cause is not *Coincident with the cause of Pelagius*; and that this man doth *Calumniate* us in saying that *judicious Observers cannot but perceive that they are coincident*. To thee, O God, we appeal from this *false Accuser* of the Brethren, and unto thee we refer our cause, to judge between us and this man, whether it be coincident, or the same with that of *Pelagius*.

But it may be our *Author* will object and say, That if our cause be not coincident with that of *Pelagius*, yet it is at least coincident with that of *Arminius*. We answer, that neither is that true.

For (1.) Our *Author* and those of his way, commonly say, that the cause of *Arminius* and *Pelagius*, is *all one*, and therefore if they say true in that, and do not calumniate *Arminius*, our cause cannot possibly be coincident with the cause of *Arminius*, unless it be also coincident with that of *Pelagius*, they being both one and the same.

(2.) Our *Author* saith, That we are for the *middle-way*, between the *Arminians* and the *Orthodox*, as he calls them: If that be true, our cause must lye in the *middle-way* between the two extremes, and then it is impossible to be *Coincident* with the cause of *Arminius*, for that is *one of the extremes*; and it is evident by ocular demonstration that the *middle* cannot be the same with either of the *sides*, and so cannot be coincident with either of the *extremes*.

If our *Author* say, that we are come off from the *middle-way*, and are come over to *Arminius*, and so are now on the other *extreme*, and wroag side, in opposition to the *Orthodox*, who are on the extreme right side.

We Answer (1.) If that be true, and he know it, then he is guilty of a gross lye, in saying that our cause is coincident with that of *Arminius*, and so that we are *Arminians*, and yet that we are for a *middle-way* between the *Arminians* and the *Orthodox*. If he will have us to be *Arminians*, he must not (if he be a true honest man) say that we are for a *middle-way* between the *Arminians* and the *Orthodox*.

(2.) If we be come over from the *middle-way* unto the *Arminian* extreme, we desire our *Author* to tell us *when* it was, and *how long* it is since, and *how* he knows that we are come over to the *Arminian* extreme; for we profess sincerely that we know none of these things: We neither know *when* it was, nor *how long*

It is false, nor do we know that we are yet come over, or ever shall come over to the Arminian extreme. Indeed we dare not pretend to any certain Knowledge of Future Contingents, that are not revealed to us; yet we trust in our God through Jesus Christ, that by the Grace of his Spirit, he will keep us so firm and fixed in the Truth of his Word, that we shall never go over to the Arminian extreme. And since we know certainly what we are for the present as to this matter, we can safely and with a good Conscience call Heaven and Earth to Record this day against this slander, that we are not Arminians, and that he doth very spitefully reproach and calumniate us in saying, that we corrupt Christ's pure Gospel, and obtrude on People a new Arminian Gospel, to the certain Peril of their Souls; and that our Cause is coincident with that of Arminius. But,

(3.) Though according to the Light, which God hath given us by his Word and Spirit, we believe that the *Arminians* erre from the Truth in many things, and we do from our Hearts dissent from their Errours, yet we hold our selves bound in Conscience, as we must answer to God at Death and Judgment, not to calumniate them nor any other Erroneous Brethren; and therefore we cannot in Conscience say, that whilst the *Arminians* keep within the compass of the five Articles ( wherein they differed from our Divines at the Synod of Dort ) their cause is coincident with the cause of Pelagius. We do indeed think that something and too much of *Pelagianism* or *Semipelagianism* is implied in, and by consequence follows from their Principles; but that doth not make their cause to be coincident with the cause of Pelagius.

Therefore our most Judicious and Conscientious Divines do not scruple to declare *Relagianism* to be a *Heresy*, against the very Foundation of Christian Religion: But as for *Arminianism*, keeping within the Compass of the five Articles, their Consciences will not suffer them to say, that it is one or more Fundamental Errors, or *Heresies*: this might be sufficiently proved by many Testimonies of our Divines, but instead of all that might be alledged, we shall Content our selves at present with the Testimony of that famous *General Assembly of the Church of Scotland*; which in the Year 1638. at *Glasgow* deposed all their Bishops; though that Assembly had accused many of their Bishops of *Arminianism*, yet did they not say, that *Arminianism* was as bad as, and coincident with *Pelagianism*, and that it was a Fundamental *Heresy*: They were so far from saying so, that in the seventh Session, November 28. the Moderator Mr. Henderson, in the Face and with the Approbation of the Assembly, gave this Moderate Answer unto a Politick Objection of Dr. Balcanquhal, who appeared there for the Bishops, *Controversias omnes: &c. That all the Controversies (especially if they exceed not the limits of the five controverted Articles) between the Arminians and Anti-Arminians or Calvinists, neither were nor are about Fundamental Doctrines; that indeed the Arminians erred grievously, but that he and the Synod were not yet persuaded, that all Heterodoxies, that is, that all Erroneous Doctrines, are Heresies.* This we find in the full Narrative of the Proceedings of the Synod of *Glasgow*, Recorded by Dr. Sparg in his History of the Commissions and Wars in the Kingdom of Scotland, in the Years, 1638, 1639, and 1640. And by this Passage we learn, that Mr. Henderson and the General Assembly of *Glasgow* were of another Spirit and Temper than our Author is; they would not, nor could in Conscience say, that *Arminianism*, keeping within the Compass of the five Articles, was concerning Fundamental Doctrines; or that the *Arminian* Errors were *Heresies*. But he presumes to be now wiser than Mr. Henderson and a whole General Assembly of the Scottish Church; for he sees and says that *Arminianism* is a new Gospel. Yea he is so illuminated of late, that he can see and confidently say, that less Errors than the *Arminian*, even the pretended Errors of the *Middle-way men*, are a new Gospel, or inconsistent with and destructive of the main Points of the old and true Gospel of Christ. Here we must warn our Author, and those of his

his Way, to beware that from our alledging the Testimony of the Synod of Glasgow concerning the *Arminian* Errors, they do not increase their Jealousie of us, as if we thereby shewed our love to and liking of *Arminianism*; for we sincerely profess, that though we have a real Love and Respect for the Persons of some *Arminians* whom we know, yet we have none at all for their Errors; but we do really hate their Errors, and all Errors wherever we discern them; and if we could discern any in our *fellows*, there we should hate them most of all, and renounce them with abhorrency.

But though we ought to hate, and be zealous against all Error, wheresoever and in whomsoever; yet we should do it with Judgment and Understanding, and our hatred of and zeal against Errors, should bear a due Proportion to the real Greatness or Comparative Smallness of them; for if we do otherwise, and make no difference between Errors and Errors, but judge all to be alike fundamental and damnable; the natural Consequence thereof will be this, that as soon as ever we apprehend, right or wrong, that any Christian Brethren are fallen into an Error, we shall immediately damn their Persons, and separate our selves from their Society; which we take to be against the Rules of Christianity, and highly prejudicial to the common good of Christs Church, and to the particular good of our own Souls. Wherefore, as we have warned, so we advise our *Author* when at any time he apprehends any Brethren to be in an Error, that he would not presently cry, These men have got a new Gospel, Away with them, *Anathema* to them; that is, let the curse of God be upon them; but rather take time to consider, whether it be really an Error, and if it be, whether it be a Fundamental Error, and inconsistent with their glorifying God on Earth, and obtaining Salvation in Heaven: And if after he hath used the best means he can to inform himself, he cannot but think, that it is such a great and damnable Heresie; let him think also, whether he had not better endeavour to reclaim them by instructing them in meekness and love, than presently to proclaim them to be cursed and damned Hereticks. And lastly, if after he hath conversed with them, heard them speak for themselves, and found (it may be) that they have Arguments for their Opinion from Scripture and Reason, which he cannot easily and clearly Answer, it may not be amiss for him to abate his Confidence, and to think soberly with himself, that the Errors of these men may not be so great and damnable, as he thought, nor the men themselves so bad as he took them to be; but that for ought he knows to the contrary, they may be good People in the main, and such as Christ himself will own (withstanding all their involuntary Errors) for true living Members of that Mystical Body, whereof he is the Head and Saviour.

As for our *Authors* alledging, that *Bradwardin*, *Twiss* and *Ames* are against us, because they are against *Pelagius* and *Arminius*; it implies the foresaid Calumny and false Accusation, that we are *Pelagians* and *Arminians*, and is grounded upon it, otherwise it is impertinent; for if we be (as we are) against *Pelagius* and *Arminius*, as well as they, it makes nothing against, but for us, that they are against them likewise. Yet we must tell our *Author* what it may be he doth not know, that *Bradwardin* and the *Arminians* agree in several of their Errors wherein we differ from and oppose them both; for instance, *Bradwardin* holds, that Christ died for and redeemed not only *Sufficiently* and *Efficaciously* also, many of the *Reprobates*, so that in the Visible Church, many of them are through Christ made Effectually Partakers of Regenerating, Justifying, and Sanctifying Grace for a time, inasmuch that (*quoad statum presentis Justitiae*) in respect of the present State of *Justification*, wherein they are, there is no intrinsecal difference between them and the regenerate justified Elect, but they always fall from that State of Grace or Justification totally, and finally, and are damned Eternally: The necessary Consequence whereof is, that none of the Regenerate, Justified Elect, can be absolutely sure without a Miracle, or extraordinary immediate Revelation, that they shall not fall from Grace totally and finally,



nally, and be damned too: For though they be never so sure that there is a Holy change wrought in them, and that they are converted and justified, and in a State of Grace for the present, yet they can conclude nothing from that with an absolute Certainty; that they are elected and shall persevere to the end and be saved; because all that Grace that they have for the present, is of the same common Nature with that Grace which is in many Reprobates, and so the one may be finally lost for ought they can know to the contrary, as well as the other. Thus *Bradwardin* by holding the actual Justification and Sanctification of Reprobates, subverts the Doctrine of the Saints total and final Perseverance in Grace, and Assurance of Salvation, as shall be proved from his own Words, if our Author have the boldness to deny the matter of Fact. And now let him go and make his best of *Bradwardin*, and tell the People what an Orthodox Defender of the Grace of God, he hath got for his second against us, whom he hath highly provoked to the Combat, and necessitated to take Arms for our own Defence: For as *Rufinus* said of old, *Christianus non est qui notam Hæreses dissimulat*; He is no (good) Christian, who suffers the black Mark of Heresia to be set upon himself, and does not endeavour to wipe it off, and clear himself of it.

But now at last it is like, our Author will say, that if we are neither *Pelagians* nor *Arminians*, yet we can never clear our selves of being *Middle-way-men*, and that here he hath us, and will hold us, and we shall never escape his Inquisition.

Whereunto we Answer, That according to the Description, which *Let. p. 2.* he gives of a *Middle-way-man*, we may safely and with a good Conscience according to the Light which God hath given us, deny that we are *Middle-way-men*; for he makes a *Middle-way-man* to be one who espoules, defends and promotes a *Middle-way* betwixt the *Arminians* and the *Orthodox*. But that we are *Middle-way-men* in this Sense, we must deny; for we cannot own our selves to be such men without lying against our Consciences, and saying, that we are not *Orthodox*, or but *half-Orthodox*, which we believe to be a great falsehood.

If therefore our Author would have us to confess that we are *Middle-way-men*, (1.) He must give us a better and truer Definition of a *Middle-way-man*, for this will not fit us at all; or belike he would have the World believe that we are *half-Arminians* and *half-Orthodox*; but if that be his meaning, in intimating that we steer a *Middle-course* between the *Arminians* and the *Orthodox*, it is an abominable Calumny which we have already wiped off, by solemnly and sincerely Declaring that we do not participate of the *Arminian* extreame at all, we are no *Arminians* in whole or in part.

(2.) He would do well to tell us whom he means by the *Orthodox*, it may be that by the *Orthodox*, he means chiefly himself and his small party, exclusively of all other Protestants. If that be his meaning; we say,

(1.) That he must not thus beg, but prove his *Orthodoxy*, before we can own him to be thus very *Orthodox*.

(2.) We think that such a Notion of *Orthodoxy* is too narrow and *Schismatical*. It is a Monopolizing of soundness in the Faith to a Party, and that Comparatively a small Party of Christians too; and a branding of all the rest with the Mark of Unsound and Erroneous in the Faith: Whereas the real Difference between those called *Middle-way-men* on the one side, and the most of those called *Orthodox* on the other, may not be matter of Faith, strictly so called, but rather matter of Opinion; and so both Parties may be *Orthodox* or sound in the Faith: That is, notwithstanding some different Sentiments in lesser things, they may both firmly and fully agree in believing all the Articles of Christian Faith, which are necessary to Church Communion on Earth, and to the obtaining Eternal Salvation in Heaven, through the Mercy of God the Father, the Merits and Satisfaction of the Son, and the Grace of the Holy Spirit.

(3dly.) If he had shewed us in his Letter, wherein that *Middle-way* doth particularly consist, according to his Opinion; we should have (it may be) either owned or disowned it in part or in whole, according as we had found him to have truly represented or misrepresented it to the World. But since he hath not done that, we cannot know certainly what he means by that *Middle-way* he talks of.

(4thly.) Yet by some Passages in his Letter, we guess that he Points at the controversy about the extent of *Christ's Death*, which hath been amongst Protestant Divines since the Reformation, or since the time that *Beza* and *Piscator* began to write on that Head after the Reformation.

And if that be the thing he Points at without naming it, we will, *First*, Give the true State of the Controversie. *Secondly*, Declare briefly what our Opinion is, as to that matter. And for the State of the Controversie:

*First*. There are some Divines in the World, who are said to hold that Christ died *equally* for all men, Elect and Non-elect; and that God on the account of Christ's Death, gives a common sufficient Grace to them all, whereby they may all (if they will) apply to themselves the Vertue of Christ's Death, and thereby obtain Justification and Salvation. But that Christ did *not* dye for the Elect, out of any *special Love* to them above others; and that God through Christ doth not give any *special Effectual, Determining Grace* to the Elect more than to the Non-elect. This is the *Arminian extrem*.

*Secondly*, There are other Divines, who hold that Christ died for the *Elect only* and *exclusively* of all others, and that he died *not* for any of the *Non-elect* in any proper tolerable true sense; that he no more died for any of those Men, who are not elected to Eternal Life, than he died for the *Devil*; and that such Men have no more to do with the Satisfaction and Merits of Christ, than the *Devil* hath. This is the *other extrem*. And we suppose that this is that which our Author accounts the *Orthodox* side, and that he is of this side himself.

But *Thirdly*, Between these two extrem Opinions, there is a Golden mean, there is a *Middle-way*, which hath been many hundred years ago, and still is expressed in this form of Words, That Christ died only for the *Elect Sinners* of Mankind both *Sufficiently* and *Efficaciously*, but that he died for the *Non-elect* only *Sufficiently*, but not *Efficaciously*. This is the State of the Controversie.

2. If, *Secondly*, It be now demanded Whether we be for this *Middle-way* or not? In Answer to that demand we say, That there are a great many of us, who are Calumniated by our Author as *corrupters of the Gospel*, by holding a Conditional Covenant; and tho' we do not doubt, but we all agree in the foresaid General form of Words, and in admitting the Distinction of Christ's dying for the *Elect Efficaciously*, and for the *Reprobate only Sufficiently*; yet it may be, that when we come to explain what we particularly mean by Christ's dying *Sufficiently* only for the *Non-elect*, there will be some little Difference amongst us in some of our Notions and Expressions, and possibly some of us may not in effect differ from our Author, further than in the manner of our Expression, and in the Method of our Conceptions and Notions.

But (1.) We are all of one Mind and of one Faith with respect to Christ's dying *Efficaciously* for the *Elect* only, and we hope also that our Author himself agrees with us herein: Which is the main thing wherein our Agreement is necessary. And then,

(2.) As to the *Non-Elect*, especially those of them to whom the Gospel is preached; we hope all of us do and will agree to this, That Christ died for them *sufficiently* in such a sense as he did *not* dye for the fallen Angels, so that if they should believe in Christ and repent of their sins, as they are bound to do, according to the remour and terms of the Gospel, they should be saved through Christ; and not perish as they do by persevering in Unbelief and Impenitence: And being thus far agreed,

greed, we hope we shall keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace; and as to any little difference of Judgment that may remain, we shall bear with one another in Love, after the example of the famous Synod of Dort, whereof the Members differed in the Synod upon this very point, and yet they bore with one another, and wisely agreed against the *Arminian* extreme, as most manifestly appears from the *Acts* of that Synod. And we would hope also that our Author and those of his way, will not be against this mutual forbearance, when they consider that the said middle-way was not only tolerated but even approved by the Synod of Dort, in that the *suffrages* which expressly asserted it, were approved; and that long before, it was held by our first Reformers both at home and abroad. For instance, the Universality of Christs death in the sense before explained, was believed and professed by the Blessed Martyrs *Latimer* and *Hooper*, in England, as also by the Church of England her self; and by *Luther* in Germany, and *Calvin* at Geneva, as shall be proved by their own words, to be seen in their writings extant at this day, if any have the confidence to deny it. At present we shall only give our Brethren to understand, First, That *Luther* on *John* 3.16. God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever, &c. says [ *Jam jané tibi & omnibus hominibus fatendum est mundum, &c.* ] Now truly, thou and all men must confess, that the whole race of Mankind is called the World, comprehending in one, all men in general and every man in particular; dost thou believe therefore that thou art a man? or if thou canst neither believe nor know that, put thy hand in thy bosom, or feel thy Nose, make an experiment whether thou hast not all thy Members full of flesh and blood, as other men? Wherefore then wouldst thou exclude thy self out of this word (World), since Christ expressly declares that God did not send his Son to the Virgin Mary only, nor gave him to Peter or Paul, but to the World, that all might lay claim to him, even as many as are called the Sons of Man, &c.

Secondly, That *Calvin* on 1 *John* 2.2. says, [ *Ego verum esse illud dictum sator sufficienter pro toto mundo passum esse Christum, sed pro electis tantum efficaciter.* ] 'I confess that saying to be true, That Christ suffered sufficiently for the whole World, but efficaciously for the Elect only.

And on *Rom.* 5.18, [ *Communem omnium gratiam fecis, quia omnibus exposta est, non quod ad omnes extendatur reipsa, nam etsi passus est Christus pro peccatis totius mundi, atque omnibus indifferenter Dei benignitas offertur, non tamen omnes apprehendunt.* ] 'The Apostle (saith *Calvin*) Makes Grace common to all Men, because it is exposed to all Men, not that it is really and effectually extended unto all. For tho Christ suffered for the sins of the whole World, and through the goodness of God, he is indifferently offered unto all; yet all do not apprehend or receive him. Here is that which is called the middle-way owned by *Luther* first, afterwards by *Calvin* as plainly as can be expressed in so few words. Whereupon we demand, Did our First Reformers, *Luther* and *Calvin*, by this, Corrupt the Old, and Preach a New Gospel, or not? If they did corrupt the old true Gospel, and preach a new false Gospel, Then (1.) We owe no great thanks to them, or respect to their Memory, for their Service in Reforming the Church.

(2.) If we grant this to be true of *Luther* and *Calvin*, we betray the Reformation, and yield to the Papists that which their hearts do most earnestly desire, that *Luther* and *Calvin* may be accounted Two Impostors and Deceivers, who deluded the People, corrupted the Christian Religion, and Preached a new Gospel to the World. For our parts, we dare not thus far betray the Protestant Cause to the Papists; rather than do so, we maintain that *Luther* and *Calvin* by holding universal Redemption in the sense explained, did not corrupt the Christian Religion, nor preach a new Gospel. And if they did not, then those amongst us who hold universal Redemption as they held it, do no more corrupt Religion, nor preach a new Gospel than they did; and consequently it is a vile Calumny and Reproach cast upon us (and through us upon the First Reformers,) that by the middle-way aforesaid we corrupt Religion, and preach a new Gospel.

We

We have been something long in shewing the false-hood of our Authors first Calumny; and in wiping it off, because it is *general*, and seems to comprehend or to be the ground of all the rest that abound in his Letter. But for the rest of them, since we have removed the grounds of them, by the account we have given of our principles in the points of *Justification* and of the *extent of Christs death*, they fall of themselves, and light on the head of him that raised them; and therefore we shall not much trouble either our selves in refuting them, or others in reading a long Refutation of them. Yet we will take particular notice of some of them, and briefly shew how false they are.

*Second* HIS Second is to be seen in the sixth page of his Calumny. Letter, where he saith, 'The righteousness of Christ *Let. pag. 6.*  
'in his active and passive Obedience, hath been asserted by  
'Protestant Divines, to be not only the procuring and meritorious cause of our  
'Justification, for this the Papists own; but the matter, as the Imputation of it is  
'the form of our Justification.

Here a gross Calumny is implied, *to wit*, that we differ not from the *Papists* in the point of Justification, and to make the simple people believe this, he gives them to understand that we hold Christs righteousness to be only the procuring and meritorious cause of Justification, and that the *Papists* own this as well as we do; and consequently that there is little or no difference between us and the *Papists* in the Fundamental point of Justification.

But that this is a Calumny doth appear by what we have said before, when we shewed that Christs Righteousness alone comes in the place of that personal perfect sinless Righteousness which was the condition of the first Covenant in Innocency, and of the law of Works, and by which personal Righteousness, man was to have been justified according to that Covenant, if he had perfectly kept it, and had not fallen from his Innocency. There we shewed that, since no man in his lapsed state hath or can have in himself that personal sinless righteousness; every man is to seek a righteousness in Christ that may serve him for his Justification, instead of that which he should have had in himself, but hath not; and he that seeks it in Christ, as he ought to do, will there find it: For Christ by his obedience, unto death, even the death of the Cross, hath paid the full price of our Redemption, and by paying that price hath made full satisfaction to the Justice of God for our sins, and hath merited for us the full pardon of our sins, and eternal Salvation of our Souls, if we sincerely believe, repent, and obey the Gospel, by that Grace which he hath also purchased for us by his blood, promised to us in his Word, and gives unto us by his Spirit. So that we are *complete in him* who is our head, our living and life-giving head, *in whom it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell*, that out of his fulness we might receive, and grace for grace. Now will any man of Conscience, who hath a competent Understanding of the controversies between us and the *Papists*, say, that they give as much to Christ in the point of the Justification of a Sinner, as here we do, and ever did? We ascribe *all satisfaction for sin* both with respect to eternal and temporal punishment, unto Christ and his righteousness. We likewise ascribe unto Christ and his righteousness *all merit* of every good thing whatsoever, all merit of pardon of sin, of right to eternal life, and of eternal life it self, and all the degrees of it; all merit of whatsoever Grace here, and of eternal Glory hereafter. Dare any man say that the *Papists* do all this, that they ascribe all satisfaction and all merit unto Christ and his Righteousness: And that as we, so they deny that men do satisfy Gods justice for sin with respect to any punishment, and that they properly merit any the least grace or favour at the hands of God? We think no Protestant, especially that is a Minister of Christs Gospel, will be so *impudent* or so far imitate the *Father of Lies*, as to affirm these things to be true, which all the World know or may know to be notoriously false.

There are indeed *some* Papists, for instance *Bellarmin*, lib. 2. *de justif. cap. 7*, Who in dispute, grant so much to us that they may seem unto some who do not thoroughly understand their principles, to have yielded the whole cause to us. And therefore some of our famous Divines, as *Dr. Downham*, *Prideaux*, *River*, *Le Blanc*, & *Turretin*, have not stuck to say, that *Bellarmin* there grants the very thing which Protestants plead for, and he had disputed against; and that if he would stand to those few words, and not contradict them again, there might be an end of that Dispute about the imputation of Christs Righteousness. After *Turretin* had quoted *Bellarmin*, saying, 'That [if the part. 2. loc. 'Protestants would have this only, that Christs merits are imputed 16. p. 709. 'to us, because they are given to us by God, and we may offer them to the Father for our sins, because Christ took upon him the 'burden of satisfying for us, and reconciling us to God the Father, their opinion 'or judgment would be right.] He adds immediately after this Concession and Confession of *Bellarmin*: [*Atqui nihil aliud volumus, nam quod addit, nos velle ita imputari nobis Christi justitiam, ut per eam formaliter justii nominemur & simus: hoc gratis & salvo supponit ex præposito à sua hypothesis de justificatione morali.*]

'Yea but, or surely, we would have 'no other thing, (but what *Bellarmin* hath here granted: us) for as to that which 'he adds, that we would have Christs Righteousness so imputed to us, that by it 'we may be denominated and may be formally Righteous, he supposeth it without 'proof, and tallies, upon their perverse and preposterous Hypothesis concerning a 'moral Justification. Thus *Turretin* writes of the Concession and Confession of *Bellarmin* and other Papists. Then he proceeds to shew that notwithstanding those good words of theirs whereby they seem to come over to us, yet they and we are never the nearer, but remain at as great distance as before, because by Gods imputing to us Christs merits in order to Justification, they mean that for the sake of Christs merits imputed to us, God infuses Grace into us, by which infused Grace it is that we are justified according to their principles. 'Whereas we hold that Christs 'merits are so imputed and communicated to us, (*ut sint causa meritoria sola nostra justificationis, nec ulla alia deus justitia propter quam absolvimur in conspectu dei,*) that 'they are the alone meritorious cause of our Justification, neither is there any other Righteousness for which we are absolved in the sight of God. Thus *Turretin* shews that notwithstanding the seeming agreement between Protestants and Papists in the point of Justification, yet the real difference remains still. But how doth he shew it? Doth he shew the difference by denying that Christs Righteousness is the meritorious cause of our Justification, because the Papists affirm it to be so in some sense? No, no, *Turretin* hath left that unto our Author to do, if he please; but he shews that there is a great difference in the point of justification between us and them.

(1.) In that we hold Christs Righteousness to be the meritorious cause of Justification, in another sense, than they hold it so to be.

(2.) In that we hold Christs Righteousness exclusively of all other, to be the only meritorious cause of Justification; whereas the Papists deny this, and affirm that men are first formally justified before God by infused Grace and Justice, and that by the exercise of that infused Grace and Inherent Justice, they themselves do merit their further Justification in this World; and eternal Life, and Glory, in the World to come. And we think this is a very considerable difference. Yet this is far from being all the difference, for Monsieur Claude who was one of those

Divines whom our Author calls middle-way-men, in his defence of the Reformation shews, that notwithstanding the agreement that there may be in some things between Protestants and Papists in the point of justification, there still remain no less than twelve differences relating to that point, whereof many are very considerable, we pray all who desire satisfaction in this matter to consult the place in Monsieur Claudes Book which we refer

Claudes Historical defence of the Reformation. par. 2. ch. 6. p. 217, 218 &c.



referr to, especially let those who can, consult the original in which all is clear; whereas some things are obscure, and hardly intelligible in the *Translation*; there a man may see the true reason why our first Reformers laid so great stress upon the Controversies they had with the Church of Rome about the Article of *Justification*, and that they then had, and we at this day still have great cause so to do; and yet amongst all those Controversies which *Claude* observes to be between us and Rome upon that Article, there is not a word of that Dispute about the *manner and form* of Justification, about which our Author in his great Wisdom thought fit to inform the ordinary plain people, who either want time or judgment to peruse large and learned Treatises. The man Letter p. 35. it seems would have the people to think that surely he is mighty with p. 6. well acquainted with all the opinions that have been in the Church, and that he can inform them of them all, and tell them to a hair which is right and which is wrong; therefore he reckons up so many Controversies as have been and are among Reformed Divines. But *cui bono*, to what good end and purpose did it serve, to tell simple injudicious people that there are so many differences amongst Protestant Divines about Justification? Whatever our Author may think of it, others cannot but judge that this course tends rather to confound, distract and unsettle injudicious people, than to edify and stablish them in the Faith: For it is not probable that there are many so very injudicious as to believe that he can lay the Spirits again which he hath raised, we mean, that he can infallibly decide the Controversies which he hath brought upon the Stage before the People; and so quiet the minds of those whom he hath perplexed, and discomposed. To us he seems not altogether so well qualified for deciding of Controversies, and quieting peoples minds, as for throwing dirt on his Brethren, and calumniating them to the People, as if they differed not from the Papists, in holding Christs Righteousness to be the meritorious cause of Justification, which if it be not a lie, we are sure it is a *swinging falsehood*, and a very great mistake.

Third HIS Third Calumny is to be seen in the 8th and 9th Pages of the Calumny. Letter, and it is, 'That we deny the Headship of Christ, and 'not only deny his Suretyship, his being the Second Adam and a publick 'Person, but also treat these things with contempt. All which is utterly false: and on the contrary, we declare that with all our hearts we own Christs Headship and Suretyship, his being the Second Adam and a Publick Person. For his Headship we believe according to the Seventh Canon of the Synod of Dort, on the first head of Doctrine concerning Divine Predestination, That (*Deus Christum ab æterno Mediatorem & omnium Electorum caput, salutisque fundamentum constituit*); 'God 'from eternity ordained Christ to be the Mediator and Head of all the Elect, and 'the foundation of Salvation. We believe also according to the Suffrage of our Britain Divines, read in and approved by the same Synod, That Christ is the head and foundation of the Elect, so that all saving Graces prepared in the Decree of Election, are bestowed upon the Elect, only for Christ, and through Christ. This was their Position, upon which they say, 'That [God in the eternal English Election of particular Men, by one and the self same Act, doth Translation 'both assign Christ to be a head to them, and also doth appoint of the Suffrage, p. 3, 6. 'them according to his good pleasure, to be the Members of Christ, 'so wit, in time when they believed.

For his Suretyship, doth this man think that he can make the simple People believe that we are so impious as to deny it, and treat it with contempt? when as the Apostle saith expressly, that Jesus was made a Surety of a better Testament, Heb. 7. 22. But it may be our Author means that some of us deny the Antient notion of a Surety, and treat their notion with contempt; and indeed that may be, but what then? Doth it follow that therefore we deny Christs real and true

*Suretyship*, which God hath revealed in his Word for our Faith and Comfort? Before that consequence be admitted, our Author must prove that the *Antinomial* notion is the real, true, Scripture-notion of Christ's Suretyship; which we do indeed deny, and condemn as a very false unscriptural notion; and challenge him to prove it by Scripture.

As for Christ's being the *Second Adam*, it is an abominable falshood that we deny it, or treat it with contempt; so far are we from so doing, that on the contrary we do most firmly believe it, and openly confess that as the *First Adam* was the cause of Sin and Death, unto all who in the ordinary way of human Generation partake of the natural Birth; so Christ as the *Second Adam* is the cause of Righteousness and Life unto all who by Divine Regeneration partake of the Spiritual Birth: But as no man suffers any actual prejudice by the *first Adam* before he be naturally begotten and generated; so no man actually receives in himself, any saving benefit from Christ as the *Second Adam*, before he be Spiritually begotten and regenerated; our meaning is, that no man actually receives from Christ before the time of his Spiritual Regeneration, any benefit that hath a necessary and infallible connexion with Salvation, by the Constitution and Ordination of God.

Lastly, That we deny and condemn Christ's being a *Publick Person*, is false So far are we from that, That on the contrary we sincerely declare to all the World, that we most firmly and stedfastly believe that Christ is a *Publick Person*, that he is the *publick Prophet, Priest and King* of the whole Catholick Church; and that it is his proper incommunicable Glory to be such a *publick Person*.

Fourth **H**IS Fourth Calumny is, that we teach such Doctrine in the point of Calumny. Justification, as neither we our selves nor any other sensible man dare stand to at Death. This is to be seen in the 18th and 19th pages of his Letter.

If this were true, we confess it might justly prejudice People against our Doctrine; and give them and our selves too cause enough to suspect it to be false. But this is like the rest, utterly false, and contrary to Experience. For our Doctrine is (as we have said often) that Christ's most perfect, satisfactory, Meritorious Righteousness, is to us and all that are saved, instead of that perfect sinless Righteousness which we ought to have had in our selves, but since the fall neither have nor can have; and that by and for the said Righteousness of Christ alone, we are justified from the guilt of all our sins of Omission and Commission, Original and Actual, and are accepted as Righteous before God, and receive a Right and Title to Eternal Life: This is the only Righteousness which we trust to as the cause of our Justification; this Righteousness we hold to be given unto us, if through Grace we sincerely believe in Christ and repent of our sins; and that on the account of this Righteousness we shall obtain eternal Life and Salvation, if through Grace we persevere to the end in Faith and Repentance, and in leading a holy Life, as was before explained: But on the contrary we maintain, that the forsaide Righteousness of Christ is not given to any for their actual Justification before they first through Grace sincerely believe and repent; and that none shall obtain eternal Life and Salvation on the account of Christ's Righteousness, but those who after they have first believed and repented, do not Apostatize either totally or finally, but in opposition to such Apostacy, persevere in Faith, repentance and holy Gospel-obedience unto Death. This is the sum and substance of our whole Doctrine in the point of Justification. Now why we or any sincere Christian should be afraid to stand to this Doctrine at the hour of death and in the day of Judgment, it is above our Capacity to understand; for this is the Doctrine which the Lord himself hath taught us by his holy Spirit in the Canonical Scriptures: And therefore,

For if the Scriptures be true, this Doctrine cannot be false, but is and must be true; and it is very strange and wonderful, if all true Christians be afraid to dye in the Faith of the true Doctrine of the Holy Scriptures.

We rather think, that if they be not delirious, but have the use of their Reason, they are not true Christians, but meer *Hypocrites* that renounce the fore said Doctrine of Justification, and are afraid to stand to it at Death.

We are sure that good *Hezekiah* was not afraid to stand to this Doctrine, when he justly apprehended himself to be under the Sentence of Death, since we find it written in *Isa.* 38. 3, 4. That he prayed thus unto the Lord, *Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in Truth, and with a perfect Heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight, &c.*

And God was so far from being displeased with this his Prayer, that he most graciously accepted it, and shewed himself so well pleased with *Hezekiah*, that he gave him a further Lease of his Life for fifteen years, and Sealed the Lease with a Miracle; a thing we do not find that ever the Lord did for any other Man before or since. We have also read of many in History, and have heard of others, and have our selves known some, who have not been afraid to stand to our Doctrine aforesaid at Death; but have died comfortably in the Faith of it: As for our selves we live in the Faith of it, and desire to die also in the Faith of it; and as we account it our Duty, to stand to it in Life and at Death; so we trust and hope that (if the Lord be pleased to preserve to us the use of our Reason, and to continue to us the Presence of his Spirit and Assistance of his Grace) we shall be enabled to perform our Duty in owning at Death; and if he call us to it, in *Sealing with our Blood* the said true Doctrine of Justification, which we have preached to his People in the time of our Life. As for our Author, we hope he agrees with us, that Christs Righteousness is never to be renounced, but always to be trusted to and relied upon, as the cause of our Justification and Salvation, both in Life and at Death: What then would he have us to renounce? If it be our own *Merits*, he knows very well, that we admit not the very possibility of any proper *Merits* of our own, and that we renounce all Confidence in such a Chimera, as much as he or any Man can do.

If it be our own good Acts or Works as the Cause of our Justification: He may know by what we have said before, that we renounce as much as he doth, and something more too, all causal Influence of any good Acts or Works of ours upon Justification. If it be *Faiths* being the Condition of Justification, that he would have us to renounce: That we can never do either in Life or at Death, for the Reasons we have given before. Besides, he himself ascribes as much, and we think something more to Faith in the matter of Justification, than we do; for he maintains Faith, to be the Instrument of Justification, and if it be a proper Instrument, it must have an Instrumental Causality upon Justification, and so must be an Instrumental Cause, and to be an Instrumental Cause, is more than to be a Receptive Condition of Justification: If we may be afraid then to stand to it at Death, that Faith is the Condition of Justification, he may have more Cause to be afraid to stand to it at Death, that Faith is the Instrument of Justification.

But we suspect his meaning is, that we will and must be afraid to stand to it at Death, that Repentance is a Condition necessary to Justification; and that perseverance in Faith, and in the Practice of Repentance and Holiness, is necessary to the obtaining Possession of Eternal Salvation: and if this be it indeed, which he thinks we and all sensible men must be afraid to stand to at Death, and therefore must renounce, we cannot but judge the Man to be under a strong Delusion: for First, The Scripture is as full and clear for the Truth of these things, as it is for the Truth of any other Article of the Christian Faith.

*Secondly*, We have the Concurrent Judgment of Divines both Ancient and Modern, agreeing with us in the same Truth, as we have proved at large.

*Thirdly*, We have heard of many, and have known some who upon their Death-bed have bitterly lamented and bewailed, that they had not repented of their Sins in-time, that for and through the Meritorious Righteousness of Christ, they might have obtained Pardon and Justification; but we never heard of or knew any, who upon their Death-bed lamented and bewailed that they had repented too soon in order to their obtaining Pardon and Justification through Christs Meritorious Righteousness.

The like we may say of the Necessity of a *Holy Life*, in Order to the obtaining of Eternal Salvation through Christ; many have most lamentably bewailed on their Death-bed their own Folly and Wickedness in not preparing themselves for Happiness by the Practice of Holiness, *without which no Man shall see the Lord*. But we could never hear of any who on their Death-bed lamented and bewailed that they had held the Erroneous Opinion, that the *sincere Practice of Holiness is necessary to the obtaining of Salvation* and Happiness through the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ. On the contrary, the Generality of People that are serious and sensible, they then acknowledge the Necessity of sincere Repentance in Order to the obtaining Pardon of Sin, and the Necessity of Holiness, in Order to the obtaining of Salvation and Happiness through Jesus Christ our Lord. So abominably false is it, that *no sensible man dare stand to our Doctrine at his Death*, that the quite contrary is true, and *no knowing sensible Man but will gladly stand to it and own it with all his Heart*; except such *Nominal Christians* as are Conscious to themselves, that they are Hypocrites and unconverted Sinners, and fear that if the Gospel be true, they shall certainly be damned: And therefore they may possibly (some of them at least) flatter themselves with the Hopes that God for Christs sake will Pardon and Justify them *before and without Repentance*, and save them without Holiness.

But we dare not humour such People, nor flatter them, however they may flatter themselves, and therefore we must in faithfulness to Peoples Souls tell them from God, that *except they repent they shall perish*; and that *without Holiness they shall never see the Lord*, so as to be Happy in the sight of him: And for the Hypocrites Hope of being *pardoned without Repentance*, and of being Happy without being Holy, it shall certainly perish with himself: *His Hope shall be cut off, and his trust shall be as a Spiders Web. He shall lean upon it, but it shall not stand, he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure*, Job 8. 13, 14, 15.

Our Author instanceth in that Bloody Persecutor Stephen Gardiner, and in another Papist whom he commends as an *Ingenious Balaamite*, who confessed that *it is best for men at their Death to renounce their own Merits, and to trust then to be saved only by the Merits of Christ*: But what is that to the purpose? Doth that make any thing against us or our Doctrine? for doth not our Author know well enough that our Doctrine is, that always both in Life and at Death men should *abhor all Thoughts of Meriting* any good at the Hands of God by their own Works; and that they should *trust throughout their whole Life to be saved by the alone Merits of Christ*, as much as at their Death; was it not then wisely done of our Author, to Object against us and our Doctrine, the Example of Gardiner and such Papists, who after they have publicly professed as a main Point of their Religion to *trust to their own Merits*, and after they have led a *wicked Life* all their Days; at last when they come to die, think it best to renounce all Confidence in *their own Merits*, and flatter themselves with the Hopes of being *pardoned without a particular, practical Repentance*; and of being *saved without Reformation*, by trusting only to the Merits of Christ; can our Author shew from the Terms of the New Covenant, that such self-condemned Hypocrites have any sure ground of obtaining the Pardon of their Sins, and Salvation of their Souls, merely because they do presumptuously Hope that God will pardon and save them for the Merits of Christ? Is there any place in Scripture

ture that gives us the least Intimation, that ever God ordained that Christs Merits should be a Sanctuary for Rogues and Hypocrites, whilst they remain such, and that if they flee into it by a Presumptuous Confidence, they shall be pardoned before they repent, and be saved from Gods Sin-revenging Justice, before there be any real Holy Change wrought in them? It seems by some Passages in our Authors Letter, that this is the thing which he drives at, and that this is his way of Preaching the Gospel. But alas! most People need not Ministers to teach them this Doctrine, for the Devil and their own deceitful wicked Hearts will teach them this lesson, and they are but too apt of themselves to learn it. For as Mr. Book of Fox saith, Commonly it is seen, that worldly Epicures and secure Mammonists, Martyrs. Vol. 2. p. 192. to whom the Doctrine of the Law doth properly appertain, do receive and apply to themselves most principally, the sweet Promises of the Gospel, Col. 1. whereby it comes to pass, that many do rejoice, where they should mourn.

Let our Author look to it, that he be not found guilty of hardning such People in their presumptuous way of living and dying; by telling the World that Men are justified by the Merits of Christ without any previous Condition required of them, and that they are pardoned before they sincerely repent, and are accepted as Righteous through the Righteousness of Christ imputed to them, before any real change, or Holy Qualification be wrought in them: And if he be wise, let him no more say that we teach People to expect to be justified from their Sins by and for their own Righteousness; which is a thing that as we will not stand to at Death, so we do not stand for it, but against it in our Life, and now declare to the World that it is a notorious falshood, and an abominable Calumny.

Fifth Cal- **H**IS Fifth Calumny is, that there are many Ministers who in compliance lunny, with natural Men, patch up and frame a Gospel, that is more suited to, and taking with, and more easily understood by them, than the true Gospel of Christ is. And again that Divines plead that same Cause, that we daily find the Devil pleading in the Hearts of all natural Men.

This is to be seen in the 20th. and 31. Pages of the Letter. Whom our Author means by those many Ministers and Divines, who do this abominable thing, we do not certainly know; but this we know, that if he means us (as he seems to do almost throughout the whole Letter); what he saith is most false and injurious, and deserves no other Answer than such as Michael the Archangel gave the Devil, when Contending and Disputing with him about the Body of Moses, he said, *The Lord rebuke thee*. Yet we do not desire that the Lord should rebuke this false Accuser, as he rebukes the Devil in purely vindictive Wrath, but as he rebukes his disobedient Children in Corrective Justice, tempered with Fatherly Love.

Sixth Cal- **H**IS Sixth Calumny is, to be seen in Page the 23d. of the Letter, lunny, where it is implied that we say (1.) That the Sanction of the Holy Law of God is repealed, so that no Man is now under it, either so he condemned for breaking it, or to be saved by keeping it. (2.) That it doth not now require perfect Holiness. (3.) That we have much kindness for true Antinomians in Practice. Some late Writers of our Authors way, have expressly charged us with some of these things, but our Author is here somewhat more modest and wary, and only insinuates, that we say and do these things. But however wary he be in the manner of expressing his Thoughts, yet that will not excuse him from the Sin of Calumny, if he means us (as he plainly seems to do), and if the things he charges upon us be manifestly false; as they certainly are: And our Author might have known it, for a leading Man amongst those who are said to be for the Middle-way, did many Years ago expressly refute the two forelaid Opinions, which are now falsely charged upon us; as is to be seen in Mr. Trumans Endeavour to rectifie some prevailing Opinions contrary to the Doctrine of the Church of England, Pag. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13.



Be it known then unto all men, That (1.) we do not say, nor ever did say, that the Sanction of the Moral Law is repealed, so that no man is now under it, either to be condemned for breaking it, or to be saved by keeping it. (2.) We do not say, nor ever did say, that the Moral Law doth not now require perfect holiness: On the contrary we confess with our mouths, and declare to the World, what we have ever believed, and do still believe with our hearts,

(1.) That the Moral Law doth now require of all men most perfect holiness, and sinless obedience.

(2.) That all Unconverted Impenitent Unbelievers whilst they continue such, are under the penal Sanction of the Moral Law, they are under its Curse and Condemnation, John 3. 18. He that believeth not is condemned already. He is already condemned in Law; though the Laws condemnatory Sentence is not yet executed upon him. But as many as refuse and neglect to use the remedy provided in the Gospel, and so doing, live and dy in Unbelief and impenitence, they are certainly to be executively condemned for breaking the Law; and moreover having heard the Gospel preached to them, and having had in the Gospel a Sovereign Remedy offered them against the Curse and Condemnation of the Law, they shall be condemned likewise for refusing or neglecting to use the said Remedy; Heb. 12. 25. Heb. 2. 3. John 3. 18, 19. Matth. 11. 22. 24. So that professed Christians who live and dy in Impenitence and unbelief will be doubly condemned Rom. 10. 14. both by Law and Gospel; whereas Heathens who never heard nor could hear of the Gospel for want of an objective Revelation of it, they living and dying without Repentance and Faith in the true God, under the guilt of Sins against the Law and Light of Nature, will be condemned by the Law, but not by the Gospel, which they could not know; Rom. 2. 12.

(3.) Since we believe that all Unconverted Impenitent Unbelievers who live and dye in that State, are so under the sanction of the Moral Law, as that they are to be condemned for breaking it, we cannot believe that the same Persons are so under the sanction of the moral Law, as that they are not to be condemned, but to be saved by keeping it: For that were to believe a contradiction, which we have not faith enough to do. Yet,

(4.) If the case be put disjunctively, as our Author expressly puts it in his Letter, we maintain that what he charges upon us is notoriously false; and its contradictory is true, to wit, the sanction of Gods moral Law is not repealed, so that no man is now under it, either to be condemned for breaking it, or to be saved by keeping it. We firmly believe that this disjunctive is true, Some men are now under the sanction of the Law, either to be condemned for breaking it, or to be saved by keeping it. But take the latter part of the said disjunctive by it self, and understand it determinately, then we cannot believe it to be true, we cannot believe that some men are under the sanction of the Law to be saved by keeping it, because it is notoriously false.

And that (1.) Because no meer man since the fall of Adam hath kept, doth keep, or ever will keep the Law so perfectly as never to sin against it, and never to fall under the condemnation of it.

(2.) Because that Holy Scripture assures us, that if Righteousness come by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain, Gal. 2. 21. And that if there had been a Law given, which could have given Life, verily righteousness should have been by the Law: But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the Promise by Faith of Jesus Christ, might be given to them that believe, Gal. 3. 21, 22. And again that what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the Flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, by a Sacrifice for Sin, condemned sin in the flesh, &c. Rom. 8. 3.

This is our Judgment concerning the Law and its Sanction, with respect to Unconverted Impenitent Unbelievers, that so live and dye, they are under it, to be condemned, but not to be saved by it. Then

Then for *Converted Penitent Believers*, who are in Christ Jesus by Faith, and walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; we believe that they are under the Law and not under the Law in different respects.

(1.) They are under Gods Moral Law as it is a *rule of Life*, representing to them what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God; and directing them what to do, and what not to do, that they may please God in doing his will.

(2.) They are under it also as it is a Law obliging them to *most perfect and sinless obedience*.

(3.) They are under it as a Law forbidding all their sins, and likewise condemning all their sins, but they are not under it as a Law by its Minatory Sanction condemning their Persons which are in Christ by Faith, and walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit, for there is no condemnation to such, Rom. 8. 1. Gal. 3. 12. 23.

(4.) They are not under the Law as a *Covenant of Works* to be justified and saved by it. Because none can be justified and saved by the Law considered as it was a *Covenant of Works* given to man in the state of innocency, but those who perfectly keep it and never once transgress it, either by Original or Actual Sin. But that is impossible for any meer man to do, since the fall of Adam, and it is not only *Morally impossible*, but it is *Physically impossible*, yea it is *Metaphysically impossible*, that is, it is so absolutely impossible that it implies a contradiction, and can be done by no power Moral, Natural or Supernatural, by no power Human or Divine: For all meer Men without exception have *already broken* Gods Law, so as that they are guilty of death for the breach of it. And that which hath already been, cannot possibly by any power whatsoever, be made not to have been; as it implies a contradiction and is absolutely impossible, that the same thing should be, and not be at the same time, so it implies a contradiction and is absolutely impossible that the same thing should have been and not have been, or should be past and not be past at the same time. But it is a thing already past and true, that all Converted Penitent Believers have already broken Gods Law, and fallen under the condemnation of it, therefore it implies a contradiction and is absolutely impossible now, that they have kept it so as never once to transgress it; and consequently it implies a contradiction and is absolutely impossible that they should be now justified and saved by the Law which they have broken, and which for that reason would certainly condemn them, were it not that Christ hath Redeemed them from its condemnation, and by the Law of Faith absolves and forgives them.

Thus we have shewed how true penitent Believers are under the Law and not under the Law, and how it hath lost its Sanction, with respect to their Persons: It hath lost its *Promissory Sanction* by reason of their Sins, and through their own fault: But its *Minatory Sanction*, whereby it bound them over to condemnation for their sins, is taken away from it. (*with respect to Penitent Believers who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit*) by the Rich Mercy and Free Grace of God through the Satisfaction and Merits Christs obedience unto death, even the death of the Cross. Now from the Premises it is as clear as the light at Noon-day, that we do not say, as is pretended, that the *Sanction of the Law is repealed*, so that *no man is now under it, either to be condemned for breaking it, or to be saved by keeping it*. So much for wiping off the Calumny which respects matter of Opinion.

The next which respects matter of *Practice*, is that we have much kindness for true Antinomians in practice. This being matter of *Fact*, and insinuating into the People that we do not walk according to the Rules of the Gospel, it should have been proved by sufficient evidence, before it had been thus charged publicly on Ministers or People. But that is not our Authors way to bring evidence for the proof of his accusations; but boldly to accuse without proof: Whether the matter be true or false, it seems, is all one to him; for he is well acquainted with that, *Calumniare audacter; aliquid adharebit, throw abundance of dirt*

and in all probability some of it will stick. Well, but what is become of *Confession* in the mean time? It seems little of that is to be expected from some men.

As for our having much kindness for true Antinomians in practice; if he mean that we have much unfeeling kindness for them, it is more than we know of our selves; and how he should know that of us, which we do not know of our selves, we cannot understand.

But there being many of us who are thus accused, we freely acknowledge that it may be some of us have some Acquaintance and Hearers who are in some respect Antinomians in practice, and that for such sinful Persons we have much *civil kindness* and *Christian Compassion*; and by a kind and compassionate behaviour towards them, we desire and endeavour to gain them to Christ, and to Convert them from their sinful practices; where is the evil of this? what rule of the Gospel do we transgress by this? We think we are obliged both by the Law of Nature, and by the Law of God, thus to be kind to them, so long as there is any hope of gaining them. But if our Author mean, that we have much kindness for their Antinomian and Sinfull practices, or that we encourage them in such practices, and do not endeavour to turn them from them; it is utterly false: And the Lord knows that the contrary is true, and that it is to some of us matter of much grief and sorrow, that they take such courses as are both displeasing and dishonourable to God, and destructive to their own Souls; that we use means to reclaim them, that we most frequently and earnestly seek God for them, and as it were travel in Birth untill Christ be formed in them. This is the greatest kindness that we shew unto any who are true Antinomians in practice. And now let all who fear God, Judge, and even let our Authors own Conscience, Judge, whether for this we deserve to be thus reflected upon, and Calumniated.

*Drumth* HIS Seventh Calumny is to be seen in page 27b. of the Letter, Calumny. where he chages the younger Ministers with being for the new Rational Method of Divinity, and with being despisers or neglecters of *Luther, Calvin, Zanchy, Twiss, Ames and Perkins*. And to make the simple People believe that by this means they subvert the very ground and foundation of the Christian Religion, he saith two things:

(1.) That to be Rational is no fit commendation of a Minister, but rather it is the commendation of a Philosopher.

(2.) That to be Rational is yet more unjustly applied to Divinity, because, first, Divinity hath a bigger and nobler Original, than reason, to wit, Divine Revelation. Secondly, Because Divinity cannot be rightly learned without an higher principle than Reason, to wit, the Teaching of the Holy Ghost. In which our Author manifestly infinuates, That (1.) We are for a new sort of Divinity, and despise or neglect the old.

(2.) That our new Divinity is not grounded upon Divine Revelation, but upon our own reason, or the invention of our own brains. (3.) That we pretend Divinity may be rightly learned by our own reason, or natural understanding, without the supernatural Teaching and assistance of the Holy Ghost. Of which things not one is true, but they are all abominably false.

(1.) It is not true, but false, that the Brethren, are for a new sort of Divinity, and despise or neglect the Old: The falshood of this hath been already fully and clearly demonstrated.

(2.) As it is utterly false, that our Divinity is new, so it is as false that it is not grounded upon Divine Relation, but upon our own reason, or the invention of our own Brains. On the contrary, we believe in our hearts, and confess with our mouths, that the whole of our Divinity or Religion is grounded upon Divine Revelation. And as Divinity or Religion is either natural or supernatural; so Divine Revelation

lation is either *natural* or *supernatural*; and then as *Natural Religion* is grounded upon *Divine Revelation natural*, so *Supernatural Religion* is grounded upon *Divine Revelation supernatural*. That there is such a thing as *Natural Religion*, and that it is grounded upon that *Divine Revelation* which God hath made of it by the *Law and Light of nature* within us; and by his works of *Creation and Common Providence* without us; we hope our *Author* is not so ignorant as not to know, nor so perverse as to deny what in his Conscience he knows to be true; and then for *supernatural Divinity and Religion*, our *Christian Religion* considered as *Christian*, and as *Contradistinguished* from all other Religion, is of that kind; it is properly *supernatural*, and could never have been known, unless it had been *supernaturally revealed*. Therefore our *Christian Religion as such*, hath its *Original* from *supernatural Revelation*, and is grounded upon the same *supernatural Revelation* from which it had its *Original*. We do not learn it (*per viam humane institutionis sed diuinae per viam celestis disciplinae*.) by the way of *human invention*, but only by the way of *heavenly discipline and instruction*, for *faith comes by hearing; and hearing by the Word of God*, Rom. 10. 14. 17. The Word of God is the means by which God hath *supernaturally revealed* to us, our *Christian Divinity and Religion*: And that Word of God is fully and clearly contained in the *Holy Scriptures of truth*. So that we own no *Christian Divinity and Religion* but what is revealed by and grounded upon the written Word of the Old and New Testament, which is to us the entire compleat Rule of faith and holiness. Therefore it is false that our *Divinity or Religion* is new, and not grounded upon *Divine Revelation*.

3dly. It is false, that we pretend *Divinity* may be *rightly learned by our own reason or natural understanding*, without the *supernatural teaching and assistance of the Holy Spirit*. We say the quite contrary, so wit, that *Divinity* can never be *rightly learned*, that is, it can never be learned in a *Spiritual and saving manner*, without the *Supernatural teaching and assistance of the Holy Spirit*: For the *Holy Spirit* is the Efficient cause of all right Knowledge, that is, of all *Spiritual saving knowledge* of God and Christ, and of the *Spiritual things of God and Christ*. Yet we must add, that as our *Christian Religion* cannot be *rightly*, that is, *Spiritually and savingly* learned, known and believed, but by the *supernatural teaching and assistance of Gods Holy Spirit*, so it cannot be *rightly learned, known and believed, without our own Reason*.

For (1.) Grace doth not destroy, but *refine and perfect Nature*; the *Holy Spirit* doth not put out the eye of our reasoning Faculty, but opens Luke 24. 45. it, clears it, elevates and raises it up above its natural ability, and strengthens it to see *Spiritual objects* in such a *Spiritual way*, as it could not see them by its own natural power alone.

(2.) The *Spirit of God* teaches us by the *Word of God*, and both the *Word and Spirit* suppose us to be *rational*; for the *Word and Spirit of God* are given to none but *rational Creatures*, and if we were not *rational creatures*, we should not be subjects capable of being taught by the *Word and Spirit*, or of teaching others: We do not then make reason to be either the *formal object* or *rule of Faith and Religion*. But we hold it to be a light which God himself hath set up in our Souls:

Whereby (1.) We discern through Grace the *Written Word* to be indeed the *Word of God*; and the *Spirit* that teaches us by the *Word*, to be indeed the *Spirit of God*; and whereby we discover that every *Word and Spirit* which are contrary therunto, are not the *Word and Spirit of God*.

(2.) We hold Reason, right Reason to be a light which God hath given us, wherewith to *search into the meaning* of his *Word*; and by *studious inquisition and observation*, to discover and find out the true meaning of the *Word*, and to make it known to others, and by good reason out of the *Text* to convince others of the

he truth of it. These things we can never do unless we be *rational Divines*, and unless we use our *reason* in Studying, Speaking or Writing of matters of Divinity; and doth not our *Author* do the same? If he say that he doth not, because (then he should be in danger of being a *rational Divine*; but he is not, nor

*Doubting* will be a *Rational Divine*. We demand in the words of *Dr. Twiss*, *Conscience*—*Did this Authors Reason go to Bed and Sleep, when he comes to Read and Study, p. 26.* Studiously to consider the word of God? If it doth, he will give no better answer than a drowsie Student, and we know no reason but such a one may be in love with Dreams, as well as Anabaptists (saith *Dr. Twiss*). But we rather say, as well as those Prophets of whom we read in *Jerem. 23. 25.* That they prophesied, *Lie in the Lords Name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed.*

Thus we make an end of what we thought fit to say on the Fourth General Head: We have laid before the Reader, some of this *Galamies* and *Asperities* cast upon us, and have wiped them off; and we could do more, if it thought it thereby appear that he hath been a *false* accuser of *Christs Ministers*; against the sincerity of *Christian Love*.

## CHAP. V.

Where People are advised to try before they trust, and not suffer themselves to be imposed upon, and led into Error by the bold unproved Assertions and Dictates of any Preachers or Writers whatsoever.

FOR our parts we neither have, nor desire to have *Dominion* over Peoples Faith, *2 Cor. 10. 24.* And therefore we do not desire that any man should believe us, and be of our Judgment, any further than what we say or write is agreeable to Holy Scripture, and to right Reason grounded upon Scripture. In those things wherein we affirm that our *Author* hath erred from the Truth, we have endeavoured to prove by clear Scripture and plain Reason consonant to Scripture, that he hath so erred: And before People positively conclude that we are in the right, we intreat them to weigh and consider well what we have written to prove the Truth of our Assertions; and after due consideration, to judge according to the evidence of our proofs, as they will answer to God and their own Consciences. If we have clearly and faithfully declared to people, the Mind and Will of God, as it is revealed by holy Scripture; though we do not desire that they should submit their Judgments to us, and believe what we believe, merely because we believe it; yet we do expect that they should submit their Judgments unto God, as we have done: And that they should believe what we believe, because God hath revealed the matter of our belief, both to us and them. And whosoever shall either neglect or refuse to submit their Judgments unto God, and to believe what they know or may easily know, he hath revealed, will be found guilty before the Lord, of unbelief and Spiritual pride, for which he will one day call them to an account.

But on the other hand, if any think and affirm that we are mistaken in our Judgment of the things in controversy, and that therefore they are not bound with us to believe them: To such we say, that it in any of them, we are mistaken, it is more than we know, and our mistake is altogether involuntary; for the Lord knows that we have diligently searched for the Truth, as to all the matters in controversy



trouerſie, with an earneſt Deſire to find it, and with frequent and fervent Prayers to the God of Truth, that he would teach us the Truth; that by his Spirit of Truth, according to his Word of Truth, he would lead us into the Truth of thoſe Matters. And we are fully perſwaded in our own Minds, that God hath heard our Prayers, bleſſed our Endeavours, and cauſed us to find the Truth, which we have diligently ſought and ſearched for. We have alſo given the World an account of the Grounds and Reaſons of this our Perſwaſion, which we ſubmit to the impartial Examination of all that fear the Lord, and are ſincere Lovers of Truth; not doubting but that Perſons ſo well diſpoſed will find upon impartial Examination of the matters in Controverſie, that our Grounds are ſolid; and our Reaſons Cogent and Concluſive.

Yet if in any one thing, we ſhould happen to be miſtaken, (which we believe we are not), we declare, that we are ſo far from deſiring any to follow us in that miſtake, and to believe any thing in matters of Doctrine, which God hath not revealed; that on the contrary, we ſhall through Grace be really thankful, firſt to God, and next to ſuch men as ſhall convince us of our miſtake by Evidence of Scripture, or by Right Reaſon, without Railings and Sooking. As for thoſe who have accuſtomed themſelves unto that way of Writing, let them not think that ever they ſhall be able to move us from our Perſwaſion, by Railings at us and calling us Hereticks; If any attack us with ſuch Carnal Weapons, they will but diſcover their own Weakneſs and Folly, and we hope, it ſhall have no other effect upon us, but to move us to pity them, and to pray the Lord to make them better Chriſtians.

It is not any mans bare thinking, or bold ſaying that we are miſtaken and preach a new Goſpel, that can make it to be true, or prove that it is ſo. The Nature of things are not ſo ſoon changed; no, things will ſtill remain to be what they are though weak paſſionate Men ſhould never ſo often think and boldly ſay that they are not what they are; that which is once true, will ſtill remain true, though men think and ſay ten thouſand times over, that it is falſe. As on the contrary, that which is once falſe (as it is moſt falſe that we preach a new Goſpel), will ſtill remain falſe, though our Author and his whole party, ſhould ten thouſand times over both think and ſay, and ſwear too, that it is true.

We therefore beſeech all Chriſtian People, neither to believe our Author nor us upon our bare Words; he confidently affirms, that we preach a new Goſpel: We deny it, he brings no proof, but his own reproachful Word for what he ſays againſt us. We bring Scripture, Reaſon, and the Teſtimonies of Ancient Fathers, and Modern Divines for what we ſay againſt him, in Vindication of our own Innocency; and for Proof, that the Goſpel which we preach, is no other than the Everlaſting Goſpel of Chriſt, which always hath been, now is, and ever will be preſerved in the Chriſtian Church to the end of the World.

Now we adviſe People not to truſt either him or us without Tryal, but to examine what is ſaid on both ſides; and then to truſt thoſe whom they find upon Tryal to be moſt truſty, and to have given the beſt Reaſons, why they ſhould be truſted in theſe Matters. Conſider Chriſtians! what our moſt bleſſed Lord and Saviour ſaith, *Matth. 15. 14. That if the blind lead the blind, both ſhall fall into the Ditch.* It will not excuſe People before God, that they followed their Leaders; for they are rational Creatures, and they ought to ſee with their own Eyes, and not to follow their Miniſters blindly, without conſidering and knowing whether they lead them right or wrong, whether they lead them in the way of Error, or in the way of Truth. Therefore our Saviour ſaith again, *Matth. 23. 8. Take heed that ye*

Man.

*Men deceive you.* The like Advice our Lords great Apostle gave unto the Churches to whom he wrote his Epistles. *Let no Man* (said he) *deceive you with vain Words,* (1 Cor. 6. 9. 10. *Eph.* 5. 6.) This Advice he gave with respect to some of the things, that are controverted amongst us at this Day. And again, *Let no Man deceive you by any means.* (2 Thes. 2. 3.) And as a Preservative and Antidote against being deceived, he exhorted them to *prove all things, and to hold fast that which is good,* (1 Thes. 5. 21.)

Moreover, though he was extraordinarily assisted by an infallible Spirit, yet he commended the *Bereans* as People of a noble generous Mind, for trying his own Doctrine by the Touchstone of Holy Scripture before they believed it, *Acts* 17. 11. It was not any slowness in them to believe, which made them examine his Doctrine, but it was Wisdom and Prudence; for the Scripture saith, they received the Word *with all Readiness of Mind,* and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so; they received readily, and yet searched diligently, making no more haste than good speed; and by searching they found all that *Paul* preached to them to be according to the Scripture, therefore they believed his Doctrine, and believed in Christ according to his Doctrine, *ver.* 12. And this was it which *Paul* commended them for, that though he was an Apostle, inspired with a Spirit of Infallibility, and could, and did Work Miracles to confirm the Truth of his Doctrine, yet they searched the Scriptures daily, to see whether his Doctrine was according to the Scriptures, before they believed it: and when by searching they found it to be all according to the Scriptures, they immediately believed and readily received it, for that very Reason, because it was according to the Scriptures of Truth. And *Paul* was of such an excellent Spirit, that if the *Bereans* or any other People had by diligent search found any part of his Doctrine to be really contrary unto the Scriptures of Truth (which was impossible for them to do); he would have commended them also for not believing it, *Acts* 26. 22, 23. 1 Cor. 15. 1, 2, 3, 4. 2 Cor. 13. 1, 2, 3, 4. Gal. 1. 8.

Yea our blessed Lord himself when he was on Earth in his Seat of Humiliation as a Man, and Minister of the Circumcision for the Truth of God, to confirm the Promises made unto the Fathers, (Rom. 15. 8.) He did not desire that his Hearers should believe him upon his bare Word, *John* 5. 31. *If I bear Witness of my self, my Witness is not true:* That is, though it be never so true in it self, yet it is not true with respect to you, or it doth not appear true and convincing to you; therefore, as we read in that Chapter and elsewhere, our Lord (over and besides his own Verbal Testimony) used to prove the Truth of his Doctrine by Scriptures, and to confirm it by such miraculous Works, as could not be done but by the infinite Power of God, who neither would nor could give his Seal to ratifie and confirm a lie. And thereupon he said unto the unbelieving Jews, *John* 10. 37, 38. *If I do not the Works of my Father, believe me not, but if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the Works; that ye may know and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.*

And when convinced by the Notoriety of the Matters of Fact, that he did wonderful Works above the Power of Man; they were forced by the Evidence of common Sense and Reason to confess it; yet being unwilling to believe in him on that account, they found out a way to elude the force of his Argument deduced from his Miracles, by raising a dispute about the invisible Secret cause of them; and by blasphemously ascribing them to the Devil and not to God, (*Matth.* 12. 24. *Mark* 3. 22.) He did not in Answer to that blasphemous Cavil, tell them, that they must believe on his bare Word, that his Miracles were wrought by the Power of God and not of the Devil: But by plain Reason and strong Argument taken from the

the circumstances of his Miracles; he proved against them that they could not possibly be from the Devil, and therefore they must be from God, *Mark 3. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27.* with *Matth 12. 25, 26, 28, 29.* He said unto them — *How can Satan cast out Satan? And if a Kingdom be divided against itself, that Kingdom cannot stand, &c.* The Summ of our Saviours Argument was this, That his Miracles were wrought to confirm a Doctrine that is directly contrary to, and destructive of every thing that is Devilish; and wherever it is received in Faith and Love, there always the Devils Interest decays, and himself is despised and abhorred; yea many of Christs Miracles were done immediately upon the Devil himself, and he was thereby cast out of that Power and Possession, which he had got by Usurpation over the Bodies and Souls of Men; and the ultimate end of them all, was to set up Gods weak Kingdom among Men, and to destroy Satans Kingdom. Therefore the Devil could not possibly be the Author of Christs Miracles, since they were directly contrary to his Nature, and destructive of his Kingdom and Interest in the World.

The consequence is evident, because if the Devil be supposed to do such Miracles so circumstantiated, he is and must be *ipso facto* supposed to be a silly weak Prince, that for want of a Politick Head and Ambitious Heart acts quite contrary unto his own Nature, and doth what he can to destroy his own Kingdom and Interest in the World. But the Devil cannot be supposed to be a silly weak Prince, who so Acts for want of Policy and Pride: Such a Supposition is evidently false and self-contradictory; for the Devil is a most Politick, proud Spirit, that is his very Nature as he is a Devil; and his Politick, proud Nature always Acts like it self, and ever prompts him to defend, maintain and propagate his Kingdom and Interest among Men.

Therefore it's impossible that the Devil should be the Author of such Miracles as are so contrary to his Nature, and destructive of his Kingdom and Interest among Men; since it cannot be, that such a Politick Ambitious Spirit as the Devil is, should be so silly as to make war upon his own Subjects, pull down his own Kingdom, and take the Crown from his own and set it on anothers Head. This was our Lords Argument, whereby he proved his Miracles to be from God and not from Satan.

And this Reason with others he hath given us, why we should believe both his Doctrine and Miracles to be from Heaven; and doth no where require us to believe it without any Reason. Now if neither Christ nor his Apostles desired Men to believe them upon their bare Word without good proof, who are we, and who is our Author, that either we or he should desire People to believe either the one or the other of us upon our bare Words without good proof? Especially when the matter in Controversie, is of the highest Nature and greatest Importance, to wit, whether we preach a new Gospel, which he affirms, and we deny; and without any Reason, but with a great many Falshoods and Calumnies he affirms it; but with good and solid Reason we deny it, and have disproved his Falshoods, and wiped off his Calumnies.

Amongst other things our Author reprehends us (as hath been shewed) with the Name of Rational Divines, by which it plainly appears, that he himself would not be accounted a Rational Preacher or Writer of matters of Divinity; and then be-like, he would not have the People to be Rational Hearers and Readers, but to believe all that he either Preaches or Writes, without knowing any good Reason why or wherefore. But that which he casts upon us as a reproach, we take it as a Crown, being rightly understood, as we have shewed it ought to be. And if we be indeed Rational Divines, we bless God who hath made us such, and pray him

To be conscious that we have any Service for us here; and will be made us more Rational, that we may be the better able to open unto the People the true Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Faith. And as we desire to be Rational Divines in the sense before explained, so we desire that the People may be Rational Hearers, Readers and Believers, so rational as not to receive every Doctrine they hear from the Pulpit, and read from the Press, without knowing by Scripture and Scriptural Reason, why and wherefore they receive it: Therefore we exhort and beseech them to try before they trust: Believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits whether they are of God: prove all things, and hold fast that which is good. Consider what we have said, to clear up God's Truth, and to vindicate our own Innocency from the Aspersions and Calumnies of the Accuser of the Brethren; and according to the Evidence we offer you, judge impartially, as you will Answer to God and your own Consciences.

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